

November 1988

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THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS



Prince Charles
in search
of a cause

The eighties:
A decade
of parody

WHY GOLDSMITH IS SITTING PRETTY

Tycoons talk a
year after the
Crash

HIGH SOCIETY
OR JUST
HIGH ROLLERS?



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As it stood, the BMW 535i could tackle just about anything the elements cared to throw at it.

But for a BMW driver, "just about" is not good enough. So there's one more item that some people might possibly decide to fit.

Something that could deal with one of Britain's rarest climatic conditions.

A sunroof.



THE ULTIMATE DRIVING MACHINE

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Cover photograph: Sir James Goldsmith at his holiday home in Marbella, Spain. Peter Jordan/Time Syndications.



JOHN HILLELSON

28 Into the heart of high society The Dukes of Athol, Devonshire and Marlborough *are*, but not the Dukes of Beaufort and Westminster—members, that is, of high society. Intrigued by the tiny social nuances of upper-crust life, Henry Porter set out to investigate its nature and whereabouts, encountering “Bubbles” Rothermere, Lady Elizabeth Anson and assorted hairdressers and interior decorators along the way.



PATRICK GORMAN

20 Prince in search of a cause Prince Charles is often said to reflect the views of the man in the street about the design of modern buildings and the portrayal of sex and violence in the media. But who influences his opinions? Graham Vickers examines the Prince's relationship with RIBA's president Rod Hackney during his long-running dispute with Britain's architectural establishment.

56 Brighton Beach Memoir Equipped with only a battered paperback copy of the Fontana *Dictionary of Modern Thought*, and the knowledge that Wittgenstein loved Betty Grable's legs, Tom Fort attended the 18th World Congress of Philosophy in Brighton.

34 Cover Story. What makes winners and losers The reputations and bank balances of many entrepreneurs were ravaged by the events of last October. Sir James Goldsmith was one of the few men to have pulled out of the stock market before its abrupt fall. He discusses, exclusively, his amazing prescience in the *ILN's* account of how the world's great financiers have fared since the Crash.



DAFYDD JONES

54 Emma Thompson The divine Miss Em, who is both serious actress and light comedian, starts her own television series in early November, called, simply, *Thompson*. Yet a year ago she was barely known. Marcel Berlins wonders how the star of *Tutti Frutti* and *Fortunes of War* has come so far so fast. “The media glorification of Emma Thompson is not entirely explained by her achievements.”



P.A.

42 The Age of Parody Post-modernism is Griff Rhys Jones “confronting” Gary Cooper in the Holstein lager TV commercials. Post-modernism is ransacking the past to invent the present. Post-modernism, says Gilbert Adair, is the key to understanding the 80s.

INSTEAD OF BEING ONE OF THE BUNCH,



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A BREATH OF FRESH AIR



November, 1988

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Editor's letter

Behold, the 80s are over. The end came, at least in Britain, when Mrs Thatcher stood up at the Royal Society to tell the most distinguished scientists in the land that she was deeply worried about the health of the planet. There was something rather odd about the Prime Minister, never one of nature's earth mothers, talking about the ozone layer. And if the assembly of scientists had not been so taken aback, they would certainly have roared with laughter. For the feelings that she expressed are inimical to the produce-or-be-damned philosophy that has characterised the last eight years in Britain. I suspect that she may not yet have grasped this, but what she has realised is that there is a very great anxiety about the environment and, more astonishingly, that the opposition parties have not made it their own.

It is remarkable that the left and the centre have been so befuddled by frivolous introspection (Is Roy Hattersley really a socialist? What should the liberals call themselves: Democrats or Liberal Democrats? Is Paddy Ashdown really more suited to modelling for a mail order catalogue?) that they allowed her to appropriate this quintessentially 90s issue. Perhaps their floundering is all a part of the doubt about ideas—in fact, part of the slow death of so many ideologies at once—which also characterises this decade.

The 80s are a good deal more interesting than people believe. We have not merely passed through a "low, dishonest decade", as the left like to think. It has been an era of unique technological invention and application. It has also been a time of problem-solving and determination. Consider the remarkable effort that has gone into finding an AIDS vaccine, the relaunch of the shuttle, raising money to relieve famines, and the struggle for peace and accord. In a way, the can-do faith of American marketing men has spread throughout our culture, and even, it seems, into the thinking of the Soviet politburo. What is interesting about this single-minded, problem-solving period is that it has produced so little in the way of original art.

In this issue, Gilbert Adair, who is better known as a novelist and critic than as a journalist, has pinned down the way in which the 80s have cannibalised the art and popular culture of the preceding decades of this century. This could have been just a piece about style and Mrs Thatcher's Britain, but Adair has gone further, to explain the fear of the future that has propelled this furious retrospective activity. If this is all a little serious, you may turn to the brothers Fort, who approach cooking and philosophy with their usual amateurism, or to Kingsley Amis's restaurant criticism, or, as a last resort, to my own attempt to define London's High Society.

Henry Porter



MIDDLE TAR As defined by H.M. Government
**Warning: SMOKING WHEN PREGNANT CAN INJURE
YOUR BABY AND CAUSE PREMATURE BIRTH**
Health Departments' Chief Medical Officers

letters

■ **ET TU, BRUTE!** I recently read your review of *Julius Caesar* (*ILN*, August). I wonder if I might respond to a couple of points you raise—not for publication nor contention, but by way of conversation. You suggest that no one in the theatre reads what critics write. Not true—in my case at least. I read every word written about the Royal Shakespeare Company, every review, and, when given the chance, act upon what has been said.

In the case of *Julius Caesar*, which I attempted without a set at Stratford—simply the surround which happens to be brick—the critics said use a set. So for London we did. Again it was brick—this time black—but definitely a set. The critics said be more socially realist, and Rome at the time of Caesar was made of brick. At Stratford we had no mob because 20, 40 even 100 walk-ons still looks too small—we used tapes. The critics said we must have a mob, so in London we used the tapes a little and added extra actors. To cut a long story short, the Stratford production was an attempt to put the play in a poetic context, the critics urged a social context, and on the second outing I tried both and maybe fell between them. What is not true, however, is that comments from friend or enemy were ignored.

I have never seen a successful production of *Julius Caesar*. The text is highly wrought, rhetorical, and undomestic until the tent scene. It appears to be a play written for the governors rather than the governed. It is not about popular concepts of politics. Its constant concern seems to be the dangers of killers like Brutus, whose motives are psychiatric rather than political. The word “love” turns up more than it does in *As You Like It*. It seems to be about patricide—a surrogate father with three sons—soothsayers, 20 minutes of prodigies, auguries, ghosts. On the page there is a quite different play from that to which the critics, who tend only to see productions of plays, have become used.

How to realise all that: i.e. both to correct and to reveal? I don't know, but that is the reason for trying again in London—not a “terrible arrogance”. And if my only achievement is to persuade you that

Julius Caesar is a very bad play then that is a greater failure than *Carrie* and I apologise unreservedly.

Terry Hands, RSC, Barbican Theatre.
(Replying to the *ILN*'s Alex Renton).

■ **TUBES PRAISED** Matthew Engel's sensitive article on London's beleaguered Underground (*ILN*, October) is a welcome reminder that the system has worked pretty well for most of its existence.

The Moorgate crash in 1975 and, of course, the King's Cross disaster have highlighted safety problems, but the tubes are a damn sight quicker for getting around London than cars and buses!

ing over in a “statistical” traffic jam somewhere in London.

Bearing in mind that individual's lack of productivity and wasted time, the environmental pollution, including damage to both the fabric of the environment and personal health, road-building and repair costs, high car insurance premiums and the sheer bloody frustration of it all, the hourly rate would be both staggering and illuminating.

The only way that the escalating use of the motor vehicle in London can be halted is for a huge sum of money—public or private or both—to be invested in rapid transport systems for passengers and goods. Everyone will benefit

I have never seen a successful production of *Julius Caesar*

Terry Hands, RSC, Barbican Theatre

Engel mentions the rural ride to Ongar. I, too, think that despite the horrors caused by overcrowding and hooliganism—in which I include the antisocial trend of so-called “graffiti art”—a little poetry still clings to a system about which John Betjeman once rhapsodised in *The Metropolitan Railway*: “Early electric! With what radiant hope men formed this many-branched electroliner.”

G. Hales, London W11

■ **TRAFFIC JAMS** The approach to your article on the problems of road traffic and rail transport in London (*ILN*, October) is entirely symptomatic of the lack of vigour and paucity of ideas currently directed at one of the capital's gravest problems.

Logic dictates that detailed studies be carried out to discover who is travelling where, how, why and when. At the same time economic evaluations can be arrived at to determine the financial cost, per hour, of a “statistical” driver tick-

and future citizens of London will thank us for our foresight.

Piers O'Connor, London W2

■ **DRAIN THE THAMES** Having read the article on plans to unblock London's atrocious traffic jam (*ILN*, October), I remain pessimistic that any positive action will be taken, except in the way of further discrimination against the poor suffering motorist. Building more tube and rail links instead of new roads, pedestrianising the West End, and imposing tolls on vehicles—is this really the way for London transport?

I would support a campaign to review an old scheme: that the Thames be drained and converted into a motorway. Hang the expense. Now is the time for radical measures. Romantics of the kind who dote on *Three Men in a Boat* can argue that the Thames is one of London's glories, but how many of them have to drive across town in a rush-hour? The Thames should serve a function, other than just

being a tourist attraction, just as it did in the days when Docklands was used for container shipping.

P. Beckwith, London W3

■ **CRAZY LIKE A FOX** Your profile of the peculiar British explorer, Redmond O'Hanlon (*ILN*, October), should have been entitled “Carry On Up The Amazon”. The book of his travels sounds most farcical.

However, I wonder whether you take him too much at face value. His wife's willingness to support his mad adventures is entirely her own business, but I feel sorry for the hapless jungle companion whose sanity was virtually sacrificed in order to provide O'Hanlon with “a good story”.

O'Hanlon is obviously a skilled manipulator of the media. The sensationalist anecdote about the charred human remains he keeps preserved has appeared, to my knowledge, in several other magazines and newspapers. I did not believe their accounts, either.

J. Varnom, London W11

■ **STARS IN DOUBT** With interest I read your article on the restaurant Le Gavroche, London (*ILN*, August).

As to the other Michelin three-star restaurant, Waterside Inn, I would like to remark that, after several previous visits, I felt quite disappointed when dining there with friends in June.

I wrote Mr Roux but his answer was anything but satisfactory. I consequently wrote Michelin, that I consider the three-star award to highly overrate the Waterside Inn.

C. R. von der Decken, Surrey

■ **WHAT HAS BECOME OF HARRODS?** We thought the article by Jeffrey Ferry (*ILN*, October) was very perceptive.

P. G. B. Spicer, Lomho, London EC2

■ **GRACE MISPLACED** Events at the Seoul Olympics shed new light on your article *Sporting Grace Under Pressure* (*ILN*, October). I suggest that it is not so much developments in the manufacture of sporting equipment that enable athletes to perform better, as large, illegal doses of anabolic steroids.

H. Siddons, Harrold, Bedfordshire

Eventually, the priest detached himself from the others and stood silently at my elbow.

"Forgive me," he said at last. "May I ask what it is you do for a living?"

A little nettled by the implication of the question, I gestured at the easel.

"Why do you ask? Is it because my painting is so poor?"

"No," he replied gently. "Because your car is so fine."

"Ah," I said and absent-mindedly wiped my brush in my hand.

His smile was so disarming, his manner so courteous, it was impossible to take offence.

Besides, I've had worse criticisms of my painting.

"You are to watercolours," one old friend stated, "What Yehudi Menuhin is to arc welding."

Yet another declared I was a kind of "cubist Rolf Harris." Nothing can hurt you after something like that.

"Father Guido of Panzano," he said offering his hand. I took it, shook it and gave it back covered in burnt umber.

"Howard, David Howard, sorry about that."

He waved away my apologies with a smile.



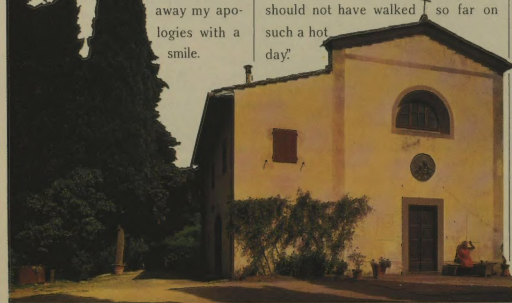
"You're staying in Panzano?" I nodded.

"I thought I recognised the car," he went on. "Are you finished for the day?"

"Yes," I replied and noted the hopeful look on his face.

"Would you like a lift?"

He grinned. "You are very kind. I should not have walked so far on such a hot day."



"Shank's pony, eh?" I muttered sympathetically.

He looked puzzled. "No, really, I walked."

Father Guido helped me load my gear into the back of the Volvo and then we both sank gratefully into the deep leather seats.

When you pay nearly £22,000 for a car, you expect a certain level of luxury and the 760 does not disappoint.

Electric sun-roof, electrically controlled door mirrors, power-steering and a powerful 2.3 litre, turbo-charged fuel-injected engine.

Oh, and electronic climate control. Dashboard gadgets normally leave me cold, but not this one.

Quite the contrary.

On the long haul from England, across France, over the Alps and down into Tuscany, I'd met with both



extremes of temperature and been bothered by neither.

A twist of a dial and the Volvo's interior remained pleasantly cool, whatever the weather outside.

"Do you paint?" I asked Father Guido. The question seemed to amuse him for some reason.

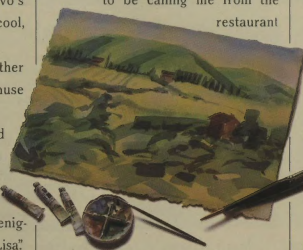
"Not any more," he replied eventually. Then as we passed a sprawling mansion, he touched my arm and pointed.

"Villa Vignamaggio," he said enigmatically, "Birthplace of the Mona Lisa."

I sighed. "That's what's so daunting about Tuscany; wherever you go there are reminders of great artists who've lived or worked here."

"Why, only this morning, I swear I heard da Vinci laughing at my presumption as I set up the easel!" He smiled. "You do yourself an injustice."

When we pulled up outside the church, a large plate of pasta seemed to be calling me from the restaurant



on the far side of the square, but Father Guido had other ideas.

"Come in," he said, "I have something to show you."

So I followed him through the church and into a tiny room at the back.

"What do you think?"

I stood rooted to the spot. The room

was filled with watercolours, stacked any old how and covered in dust. I picked one up.

"Yours?" I asked.

He nodded gravely. Was it a landscape at dusk, I wondered. Or maybe a seascape at dawn?

I looked around in delight, a terrific feeling of relief welling up inside me. I was not the world's worst artist after all.

"I'm lost for words," I said truthfully.

"Try 'dreadful'" suggested the priest and burst into laughter so infectious that I couldn't help joining in.

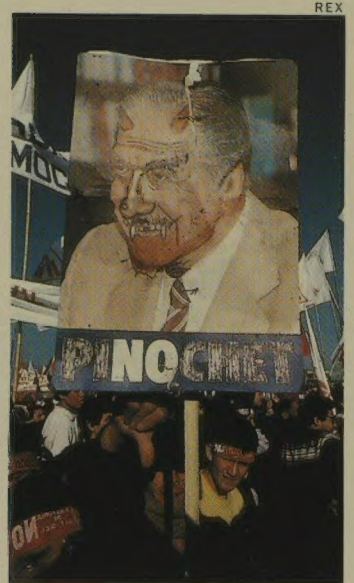
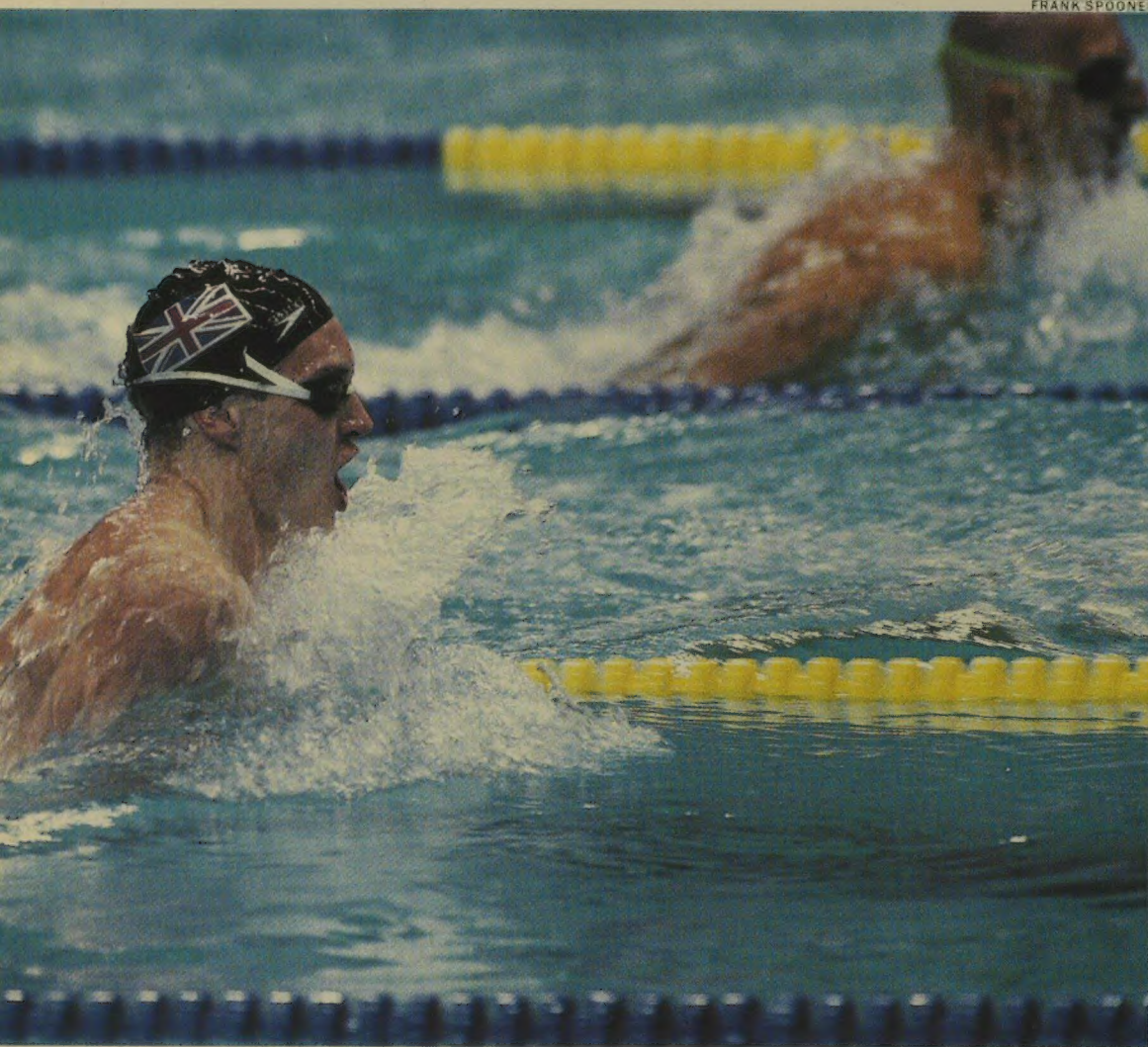
"Pasta?" he enquired.

"Lead me to it," I replied hungrily.

And for the rest of a very pleasant evening, we discussed the relative merits of Best, Beckenbauer and Platini. You know, real artists.

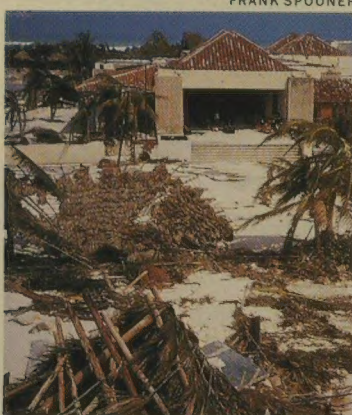
The Volvo 760 Turbo.

the month



"The whole of Canada has been on his back but that would not make him take drugs"

Ben Johnson being defended by his business manager, Larry Heiderbrecht



Above: Britain's floating asset, Adrian Moorhouse, on his way to victory in the 100m breaststroke final. **Top right:** Undisguised opposition to General Pinochet as Chileans say "No al diablo". **Far left:** The resort town of Cancun on Mexico's Yucatan peninsula is flattened in the wake of hurricane Gilbert. **Left:** Exuberant Korean dancers at the



"The best Games ever." Not even harmful revelations of drug tak

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 ► Hurricane Gilbert, with 140mph winds, swept across the Caribbean towards Mexico causing widespread devastation. Cuba, Venezuela and the Cayman Islands were all affected, but Jamaica—where an estimated 30 people died, and 500,000 were made homeless—was worst hit.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 ► In Lesotho's capital, Maseru, a

hijacked bus carrying nuns and pilgrims to see the Pope was stormed by South African commandos. Three of the black hijackers and one woman hostage were killed in the shoot-out.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18 ► The military, under General Saw Maung, seized power in Burma, imposing a curfew and banning demonstrations. Though General Maung said elections promised by his predecessor would go

Olympic closing ceremony score a perfect 10 for artistic interpretation. Right: Canada's Ben Johnson—out on his own until the Olympic medical committee caught up with him. Opposite: The opening ceremony, watched by some 90,000 spectators

ahead, protestors in Rangoon, who for several days had been calling for an interim government, remained defiant and there were violent clashes with troops.

In Haiti, Prosper Avril, a former aide to ex-dictator, Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier, declared himself president after toppling Henri Namphy in a military coup. He said he wanted to save Haiti from "anarchy and chaos".



ing could quench the flame of Seoul's spectacular Olympic torch



MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19 ► Swimmer Adrian Moorhouse won Britain's first gold medal of the Olympics when he beat Hungarian Karoly Guttler by one tenth of a second in the 100m breast-stroke final.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 ► Addressing the College of Europe at Bruges, Mrs Thatcher stressed that she would defend British parliamentary sovereignty against any attempt to create a centralised European bureaucracy: "To try to suppress nationhood and concentrate power in the centre of a European conglomerate would be highly damaging."

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 ► Edwina Currie advised pensioners in Reading to prepare for winter and the dangers of hypothermia by buying long-johns and asking their grandchildren for woolly nightcaps.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22 ► One man died, but 66 others were rescued when the North Sea oil rig, Ocean Odyssey, exploded after a gas blow-out.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 ► The fastest men's 100m in history was run at the Olympics, with four athletes finishing in less than 10 seconds. Canada's Ben Johnson came first, but the gold was not his for long. Two days after the race it was confirmed that he had failed a drugs test for the anabolic steroid Stanozolol and he was stripped of his medal and the new world record.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 ► Following the first televised debate of the Presidential campaign, Democratic candidate Michael Dukakis scored a narrow victory over his rival, George Bush, in the polls.

Will Avril help Haiti to prosper? REX



TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 ► Mrs Thatcher committed her government to protecting the environment in her first major speech on "green" issues, made to members of the Royal Society. Afterwards scientists urged her to increase the funding of key research programmes.



FRANK SPOONER

Voyage of Discovery: a huge boost for NASA

"It is nonsensical to believe that if we remove The A-Team from TV, muggers in Brixton will help old ladies to cross the road"

Film director Michael Winner responding to Prince Charles's attack on screen violence

Chile's militia: Its unexpected face

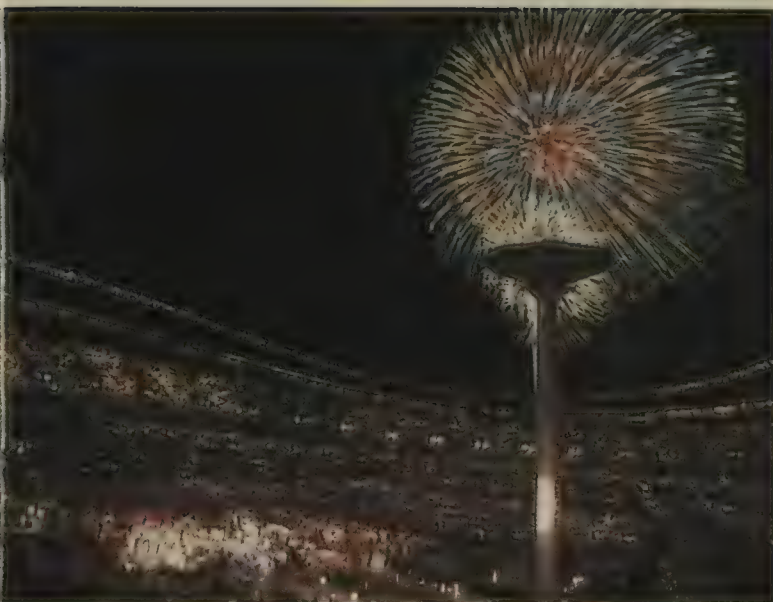


FRANK SPOONER

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 ► Florence Griffith Joyner of the USA consolidated her Olympic victory in the women's 100m on September 25 by winning the gold, and setting a new world record in the 200m.

The successful launch of the space shuttle Discovery from Cape Canaveral marked the resumption of manned space flight by the US after a 32-month interval following the Challenger disaster.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 ► A 9-2 majority verdict of "lawful killing" was passed by the jury at the Gibraltar inquest on the shootings, in March, of



Going out with a bang: the dramatic closing ceremony of the XXIV Olympiad

REX



Neil's dream ticket becomes reality

the three IRA terrorists by SAS gunmen.

Britain's Kerrith Brown was stripped of his Olympic bronze medal for judo and banned from the Games for taking illegal diuretics. But Linford Christie was cleared of drug abuse: his positive result in a drugs test following the zoom on September 28 was put down to his consumption of ginseng tea.

In an unexpected meeting of the

Communist Party's Central Committee, Mikhail Gorbachev reorganised the Politburo, ousting conservative opponents. The major changes included the firing of Mikhail Solomentsev, the demotion of Yegor Ligachev, and the "retiring" of Andrei Gromyko as Soviet President. Gorbachev himself assumed the Presidency at a meeting of the Supreme Soviet on the following day.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2 ► At the Labour Party's Blackpool conference, Neil Kinnock won a resounding victory over Tony Benn in the leadership elections, taking 88.6 per cent of the vote. His deputy, Roy Hattersley was also re-elected.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5 ► In the referendum over his continued rule President Pinochet of Chile was defeated by 55 per cent of the vote.



Incomparable Flo-Jo shows her form

Plus ça change . . .

The *ILN* 100 years ago: November 24, 1888

We sometimes laugh at French dramatists for their ludicrous ignorance of English life, manners and customs. Although we are only separated from Paris by a short journey, the Englishman on the stage is still invariably represented with weeping whiskers and a Scotch plaid suit. Englishwomen are represented as coarse, vulgar and badly dressed; and it is not too much to say that, so far as our domestic life is concerned, the Japanese know more about us than the average educated Frenchman.

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CHINA SHANGRI-LA BEIJING. SHANGRI-LA HANGZHOU. CHINA WORLD HOTEL BEIJING (MID 1989). HONG KONG ISLAND SHANGRI-LA HONG KONG (MID 1990). MALAYSIA SHANGRI-LA KUALA LUMPUR. SHANGRI-LA PENANG. SINGAPORE SHANGRI-LA SINGAPORE. THAILAND SHANGRI-LA BANGKOK.

ILN 8407

DAVID GODDARD

A room of my own.

TO USED TO BE SAID THAT EVERY NEW DORN CHILD LOOKED LIKE WINSTON CHURCHILL – mine looked like Sidney Greenstreet. So says David Goddard, troubleshooter with a major bank group. A job which you'd expect to be tough but one which he coyly describes as a cake walk. Nothing, but nothing it seems compares to the demanding business of bringing up (with his wife Kay), 3 professional trouble makers.

A friend of mine told me that when you start a family, Sunday stops being a four-hour day. A typical Sunday for David begins with youngest son Neil, 2, getting dressed – while jumping on 'Daddy's' head. It's a little game of his.

If David Goddard has one ambition however, it is to come out of these early years of fatherhood with his sanity intact. Difficult, but not impossible. His first idea, a 'no go' area in their home, an 'adult sanctuary' as he calls it was a good one.

One flaw – small children break rules. Then came promotion and with it the chance of a nice big prestigious saloon. A full minute of total euphoria followed. Then he remembered the Renault Espace from the Paris motor show. Remembering it too as being the ideal 'kiddie carrier'. Why not also the perfect retreat to spend an hour or so? He ordered the latest 2000-1 'p.d.g.'.

'Take our kids for example. (Please, please, take our kids!)' The back seats he says tend to get bagged first. 'They are highly prized – kids kudos, if you like. To them the Espace is on a par with a bright red sports car.'

As for long journeys: A simple trip to the in-laws (in our case, Chester) is 2½ hours. That's 150 minutes of wait to wall bickering, fighting, crying, wingeing, a nightmare, right?

'Not in the Espace. First you stick all their favourite toys in. Then you stick them in. (You may or may not want to turn the middle seat into a games table.) Pop a story book cassette into the stereo, and turn down the front speakers to allow the grown-ups to chat.' The effect? 'Like putting them in another room. Sheer bliss.'

The middle and rear seats also come out so it's useful in other ways too.



Last week he took

a sofa that had been patiently waiting to be thrown out for ten years, down to the dump. 'Funny, somehow my knees always ended up round my ears in the old car.'

They take friends out on outings, sometimes as

many as five at a time. Kay also likes to go shopping in it. ('She likes to go shopping full stop.') Once, he says, she brought home an old piano.

Home is a large red brick Georgian house in St Albans. They call the Espace their extension.

When not in use his room sits out in the garage – which isn't often. His favourite feature in his Espace

is the 6 speaker stereo. On his own he likes nothing better than to play it really loud. The space seems to improve the acoustics. The sound tends to stick between the seats, in other cars.

Going back to his old car he adds would be like purgatory. 'No one could ever accuse you of buying an Espace just because it looks different, (it has two sunroofs), it has far too many good points for that.'

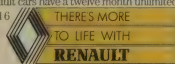
Indeed future plans include a possible driving holiday down through a few of the French wine regions (Bordeaux is already pencilled in.) We're all looking forward to it – driver included.

We left David planning the trip, parked in one of the many quiet little beauty spots not far from his home.

Just him, the Sunday newspapers and Verdi.

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Coe takes on Abrahams and Liddle. The second Profumo affair. Saatchis' eminence grise.

The Prime Minister's conversion to the Green movement is indeed recent. During the planning of the 1987 General Election campaign, one of her aides raised the subject of the environmentalists' anxieties. He suggested that the Prime Minister should at least mention the Green lobby in one of her speeches. Mrs Thatcher expressed disdain.

The aide persisted: "But, Prime Minister, the Green constituency is growing all the time. Surely it would be advisable for you to make some sort of gesture towards it." She looked irritated, then said, "Oh, very well then. Let them drain their marshes." This left her aides more than a little baffled.

The Prime Minister now finds herself in the company of a crowd of celebrities who have also recently declared their Green allegiance. These are divided between the Dark Greens (radicals), the Light Greens (mildly concerned), and what we shall call the Pastel Greens: the people who pronounce upon Green issues but do nothing.

The Dark Greens include such fundamentalists as illustrator Ralph Steadman, who simply says: "We have got to clean up this century before we move into the next one. The Green party is the only way forward. Opinions left and right are irrelevant."

The draughtsman Raymond Briggs, author of *The Snowman*, is another, as is Melvyn Bragg, the television presenter and novelist. Other Dark Greens are the actresses Julie Christie and Susannah York, Body Shop's Anita Roddick, the pop singers Chrissie Hynde and Annie Lennox, and the comedian and ornithologist Bill Oddie.

Of course, it is not always easy to differentiate between the shades of green. Many Light Greens have in the past lent their names to projects like Greenpeace publications' *Coastline Book*. The poet laureate Ted Hughes, and the writers Alice Thomas Ellis and Douglas Adams,



Raymond Briggs



Julie Christie

for instance, wrote contributions to the book. And, naturally, some of them are in the process of veering from Light to Dark as the opportunities for idealism in more traditional British politics diminish.

Other Light Greens are film producer David Puttnam, Posy Simmonds (yet another illustrator), and writer Beryl Bainbridge, who said, "Given Mrs Thatcher's energy and her facility for putting her finger on the political pulse, she might just buckle down to it. Of course, she's jumping on a moral bandwagon, but we might end up with the right answer for the wrong reasons."

And, finally, to the Pastel Greens. They include Richard Branson, Boy George, Elvis Costello, Jeremy Irons and Ben Elton.

Gigantism is now consuming the British media. The expansion of weekend newspapers and magazine

empires, combined with the growth of satellite television (with more programmes, and smaller budgets), has prompted the advertising industry to respond.

Saatchis, which combines four advertising firms, have grouped together their advertisement-buying operation under one company, provisionally called Zenith. Some £700 million worth of business, about 15 per cent of the total expenditure on advertising in Britain, will go through the company. However, the power that will accrue to the one organisation is more than the sum of its constituent parts.

Zenith will be able to make their own terms with the media; demand reductions in advertising rates, and enforce group deals that affect all the publications of one group.

There are many who are worried about the sort of muscle that Saatchis will now possess. For a while they may be reassured by the remarkably mild and modest character who leads Zenith. He is 40-year-old John Perriss, who left school in 1966 and went straight into advertising. He has been with Saatchi & Saatchi for 16 years and has risen with the company.

His sober, tidy appearance belies a toughness which will be needed to weld together the four companies. Although by nature a strategist and delegator, he is known for his long working days.

What is less well known about the approachable Perriss is that he is one of the foremost experts in Blues music, and is related by marriage to the Country and Western singer Johnny Cash.



John Lennon

news from Rome, where Albert Goldman, New York

author of the muck-raking, best-selling biography of John Lennon, goes in fear of his life. He has told a Canadian TV journalist that he is afraid to return to America, and is currently travelling around Europe with an armed bodyguard. Death threats from the late Beatle's fans are the cause, although critics of his lurid prose and specious evidence have also been lining up to take metaphorical pot-shots. Beatles biographer Philip Norman says that Goldman refused to debate with him on the radio show *Loose Ends*, and Goldman also withdrew at the last minute from a Channel 4 documentary about the writing of his book.

The 61-year-old former literature professor at Columbia University was paid an \$800,000 advance by American publishers Bantam and William Morrow to write *The Lives of John Lennon*, which portrays Lennon as a bisexual thug addicted to hard drugs. Earlier biographies of Elvis Presley and Lenny Bruce also caused offence. The comedian Peter Cook, who promoted Bruce's first London performances, insists that Goldman's report of them was "completely untrue".

The threats to the writer are proving that it can be unwise, as well as unkind, to speak ill of the dead.

ALL PICS REX FEATURES

News from Lady Antonia's drawing room. John Lennon's literary assassin shunned.

and now for the minutes of the second meeting of the June 20 Group, held at Lady Antonia Fraser's house in Campden Hill Square. The group, better known as the Campden Hill Mob, consists of a score or so of writers, politicians and broadcasters who wish to forge a new intellectual credibility for the left.

The news of the first meeting, attended by Harold Pinter, John Mortimer, Margaret Drabble, Salman Rushdie and Germaine Greer, was received in the press with ungenerous hoots of laughter.



Melvyn Bragg

Lady Antonia addressed the second meeting on the matter of the leak. She was seriously displeased: surely a group of intelligent souls could talk without one of them rushing to the press? It was established that Frank Johnson, the Conservative wit, was the source of an article in *The Sunday Telegraph*.

New recruits to the group were welcomed. They were Margaret Jay, Melvyn Bragg, Richard Eyre, director of the National Theatre, Anthony Barnett, the left-wing journalist, and Baroness Tessa Blackstone, who has recently formed the official Labour party Think Tank.

Baroness Blackstone is an old hand at thinking in a tank, and was a member of Lord Rothschild's group of thinkers in the 70s.

Geoffrey Robertson, QC, and Sir Denis Forman, Granada's deputy chairman, each presented papers on censorship and freedom of speech. There followed an interval during which the intelligentsia went to the loo.

In the second half, which was generally thought to be less productive than the first, there was much agonising about whether the group should eventually produce a manifesto. Some said yes. Others did not want to compromise their integrity as artists. They did, however, agree to form a system for banging off letters to the correspondence columns of national newspapers.

A consistent theme of the two meetings was the somewhat irrelevant contribution made by Germaine Greer, who, in the words of one member, "is probably not quite right in the head when it comes to politics".

Dates were agreed for meetings stretching right into next year. The minutes will be published here, as long as our microphone in Campden Hill Square continues to work.

One of the by-products of American presidential elections is the feverish activity to give the candidates and their running mates apt nicknames. The latest sobriquet for Michael Dukakis is a particularly good example: "Zorba the accountant".

Michael Dukakis



Joanne Whalley

Scandal, the film of the events leading up to the Profumo affair, is just being completed in Soho. Rumour emanating from the Groucho Club has it that more attention has been paid to the physical attributes of the film's two leading ladies, Joanne Whalley and Bridget Fonda, who play Christine Keeler and Mandy Rice Davies, than to the performance of John Hurt as Stephen Ward.

The amount of heavy breathing and gratuitous sex is said to overwhelm the story, its historical accuracy, and certainly good taste. This steamy approach to the subject is the responsibility of 28-year-old director Michael Caton-Jones, who was just learning to talk when the Profumo affair brought an end to Mr Macmillan's premiership.

Much hangs on the success of the film, which presumably explains why Caton-Jones has emphasised sex so strongly. Palace Pictures, the makers, have suffered two big failures and need to recoup much more than just their investment.

Is Serpentine alone in hoping that, for Jack Profumo's sake, *Scandal* flops?

at noon on October 29, Sebastian Coe will be taking

part in what may well be his last ever race. He will attempt to run the 395 yards around the Great Court of Trinity College in the 47 seconds it takes the Trinity clock to strike 12. A feat portrayed in the film *Chariots of Fire* and first achieved in 1927 by Harold Abrahams and Lord Burghley.

On the track, Coe, a double Olympic champion, could easily accomplish the task, but at Trinity he must contend with cobbles and sharp corners—and possibly, it seems, with his arch-rival Peter Elliott, who was picked instead of Coe to run in Seoul.

Coe is now considering his future career. There is speculation that, like Christopher Chataway before him, he will run as a Conservative parliamentary candidate. But, his agent says, "he's not very together at the moment".

Mike Tyson is limbering up for his fight against Frank Bruno in the world heavyweight championship by talking to a variety of shrinks and lawyers about the state of his mind and marriage. Bruno, the British contender, on the other hand, is passing the time in a much more elevated fashion. He is supplementing his education by learning to write.

Frank Bruno





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PRINCE IN SEARCH OF A CAUSE

Prince Charles's recent assault on sex and violence in the media was only his latest public crusade against the modern evils he perceives. His long-running battle with British architects is described by **Graham Vickers**



PRESS ASSOCIATION

As the Prince of Wales's 40th birthday approaches and The Job still maddeningly fails to materialise, there is some evidence that one of his most highly-publicised temporary employments may at last be coming to an end. The Prince's self-appointed role as Arbiter of Public Taste in Matters Architectural has perhaps turned out to be one of his least successful guises. Whatever advantage there may have been in the royal involvement, it has been gained at some constitutional cost. Now Rod Hackney, whose unexpected rise to the presidency of the Royal

Institute of British Architects was accelerated by his friendship with the Prince, looks likely to be succeeded in that post by Maxwell Hutchinson. Hutchinson, in an article in *The Independent* entitled "Goodbye to all that foggyishness", has already written critically of that friendship and the kind of attention it generated.

There are other less obvious signs that the Prince's influence on British architecture may be on the wane. The most recent opportunity for him to complain about architects—the annual *Times*/RIBA dinner—resulted in an uncharac-

teristically innocuous speech. The Prime Minister has now appointed Peter Palumbo, staunch champion of the Mies van der Rohe proposal so resonantly dubbed by Charles "a glass stump", as the next chairman of the Arts Council. Anthony Holden, whose biography *Charles* is published this month, notes: "Yes, I do detect some evidence that he's reined in his horns a bit lately and realises that he gravely misjudged the occasion of his initial speech."

This said, it may be premature to declare the Prince *hors de combat*. After all, his first public condemnation of architecture was nothing if not unexpected. Whenever the guest of honour gets to his feet and, apparently sober, starts slagging off the hosts, it usually comes as a shock. When the venue is Hampton Court, the guest the Prince of Wales and the hosts the Royal Institute of British Architects, then shock is overtaken by incredulity—at least on the part of the tabloids who simply cannot believe their luck. Here, at a stroke, is a dramatic royal story. What's more, it is laudably populist. How sweet to hear the well-honed voice of privilege giving probity to all those dark fears which everybody is supposed to harbour about modern buildings! How satisfying to hear the future king haranguing a roomful of the smug bastards who once consigned granny to a concrete hell on the 13th floor and now put up self-congratulatory fantasy buildings in the City! Hail Charles the Crusader!

That initial broadside, delivered on May 30, 1984 and now identified for ever as the "Monstrous Carbuncle" speech, in fact contained

Maxwell Hutchinson, critic of Prince Charles



DAVID KAMPNER

nothing more than Prince Charles's personal opinion about a proposal for the extension to the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square. This opinion was garnished with an expatiation of his view that "architects tend to design houses for the approval of fellow architects and critics, not for the tenants". If his notions were in themselves unsensational, his sense of timing and occasion was little short of grotesque: ostensibly he was simply there to present a Gold Medal to an architect from India. Last minute attempts by the RIBA to dissuade the Prince from delivering the speech (it had already been leaked to the editor of *The Times*) failed. Discomfiture spread way beyond the immediate premises. If he wanted to stir things up, the Prince almost certainly underestimated the degree to which he would be successful.

From the start there was an element of farce present, because it was never clear *which* National Gallery proposal the Prince was talking about. While the scheme being submitted for approval to the Environment Secretary was by the practice Ahrends, Burton and Koralek, one of Prince Charles's specific criticisms (concerning the extension's resemblance to a fire-station) seems to suggest that he was thinking of a quite different proposal by Richard Rogers. However, such fascinating nuances were lost in the excitement and it was the ABK scheme which was unequivocally pilloried. (Intriguingly, ABK had already incurred royal wrath by submitting a huge bill for work done in connection with transporting the *Mary Rose* from Portsmouth; Charles was chairman of the Mary Rose Trust and felt that the work should have been done for nothing.)

At Hampton Court the most immediate response came from the Environment Secretary himself, Patrick Jenkin, who was overheard to comment at the speech's conclusion, "That's one decision I don't have to make." At a stroke Prince Charles had set a precedent for short-circuiting Britain's planning procedures.

This was not all he had done. In the same speech he had signalled his fondness for "community architecture"—a fashionable term evoking the active participation of communities in the design, creation and management of their local environment. Meanwhile his decision to deliver the speech in the first place had been taken against advice from the Palace; it is widely assumed that this was the last straw for his private secretary at the time, Edward Adeane. Adeane, who had a reputation for browbeating the Prince whenever he contemplated "stirring things up", came from a family with a long and distinguished record of royal service; his grandfather, Viscount Stamfordham, was private secretary to King George V and chose the name of Windsor for the royal family. Prince Charles's chronic unwillingness to abide by tradition and



RIBA's Rod Hackney, a controversial influence

When the rhetoric was stripped away, the inescapable truth was that the Prince of Wales really liked only old buildings

Lea View House: community architecture



ALAN DAVIDSON

avoid controversial issues which might carry political overtones had been distressing Adeane for some time; soon after the Carbuncle speech was delivered Adeane resigned, a gesture which cannot have been made—or received—lightly.

Despite all of which there seemed to be every chance that the whole affair would soon blow over. Prince Charles had already made some acerbic remarks about the medical profession's resistance to alternative medicine, and if the curators of the nation's health could remain phlegmatic in the face of royal disapproval, then presumably so could the designers of its buildings. Such an analysis ignores the decidedly hysterical nature of the British architectural profession at the time.

British architects, although routinely reviled for the tower blocks of the 60s, had for many years largely been ignored by the public. Craving esteem but not even getting attention, the top end of the profession had by the early 80s developed a tendency to show off for its own benefit, to form cliques, to bitch about each other and generally to exhibit the customary neuroticism of the unloved. Then, suddenly, there were reporters at the door! They might not have come to praise, but at least they had come. Presented with a highly publicised royal boot to the groin, the professional instinct was to grunt and then get as much publicity as possible out of the incident. Naturally it fell to the Royal Institute of British Architects to pick up the gauntlet. The president of the RIBA at the time of the Monstrous Carbuncle speech was Michael Manser. He wanted to suggest to the Palace that it would be helpful if Prince Charles could be a bit more, well, *constructive* in his criticism. This led to the fatal gesture which was to launch Charles the Contentious into a new surreal level of architectural debate. A man who had lived in palaces all his life was about to befriended a down-to-earth modern architect whose declared aim was to encourage his profession to help members of the public design for themselves more or less whatever they fancied.

Michael Manser now recalls what must have seemed like a good idea at the time: "After the Hampton Court speech I got on to his office to suggest a more positive approach. He offered a dinner party at Kensington Palace, and Hugh Casson and I suggested some of the guests—including Rod Hackney." At that dinner party, according to Manser, the Prince's polite consideration for all views expressed was overshadowed by his clear enthusiasm for the approach of Rod Hackney, the champion of community architecture who, along with Edward Cullinan had already been mentioned by name in the Hampton Court speech as one of the few good guys in a dubious profession. That Prince Charles should have responded in this rather

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dunhill

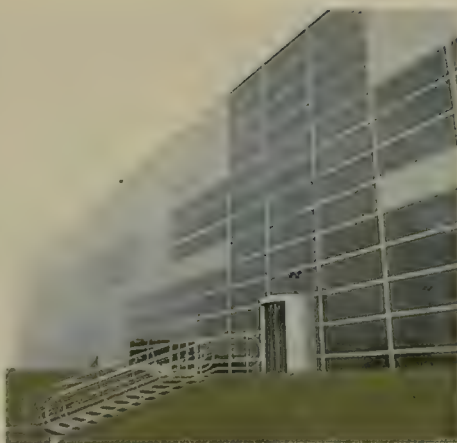
narrow way to a *bona fide* attempt to widen the debate may seem surprising, but by the time of the dinner party it seems clear that he had already made up his mind about "architecture", despite the fairly obvious fact that the whole subject is one of great complexity.

Architecture may be public art but it is not a facile subject. Was Charles aware of this at the time? Probably not. After all, it was not in the interests of anyone seeking to recruit him to their cause to tell him. A likely influence, the Duke of Gloucester, had read architecture at Cambridge and had for a time been a partner in Hunt Thompson Associates, a practice close to the cause of community architecture. Jules Lubbock, architecture critic of the *New Statesman*, claims to have introduced Charles to the subject of community architecture during a dinner at the Royal Academy some time before the Hampton Court speech; subsequently he had sent along newspaper cuttings on the subject. And a profile of Rod Hackney, whose efforts had once famously saved an entire community in Macclesfield, had appeared in *The Times* shortly before the RIBA speech. What more was there to know?

Quite a lot, as it turned out. For one thing the royal attack on ABK's National Gallery scheme was to damage severely that practice's immediate chances of getting work—despite the fact that the publicly reviled scheme was already an uneasy compromise between the Architects' intentions and the client's modifications. Charles the Unjust! The political complexion of many of community architecture's adherents might be seen, by association, as identifying the heir to the throne in a constitutionally unsuitable way. Charles the Socialist! Finally there was the fact that community architecture, whatever its merits, is more or less guaranteed to generate visual mediocrity—not to mention carbuncles—since it is not an architectural style at all, merely a set of social attitudes expressed through the preferences of tenants coaxed by architects. Charles the Inconsistent!

Apparently unconcerned with all of this, the Prince quickly aligned himself with Hackney in order to strengthen the hand of the community architecture lobby. Private visits were arranged in which minibus-loads of environmentalists, journalists and academic sociologists accompanied the Prince in his earnest researches, descending upon the unsuspecting tenants of community architecture developments from Limehouse to Hackney as well as several in provincial cities. Charles was later to declare himself "electrified" by the experience of meeting some of the people for whom he claimed to speak. He became patron of the *Times*/RIBA Community Enterprise Award and privately handed out what commissions he could to those within the charmed circle. (Whether or not Kensington Palace actually *needed* new entrance gates is open to question, but Edward Cullinan got the job of providing some). Now that the route to planning permission had been informally redefined, a stream of architectural proposals began arriving at Kensington Palace for the royal yea or nay.

As yet, there were few dissenting voices. The architecture critic of *The Guardian*, Martin



Charles hated the Plessey factory in Plymouth



Another bête noire: The Rogers's Inmos factory



On walkabout with Rod Hackney in Macclesfield

It's a mistake for him to attack individual architects of buildings.

He doesn't realise the effect and power that his remarks have

Terry's "classical" development in Richmond



TONY LATHAM

Pawley, took a series of plucky stances against a situation which he likens to "pre-revolutionary France, where things get done on the basis of personal prejudices and indignance". Peter Ahrends, whose ABK was feeling the pinch, might be expected to consider the Prince's views "offensive, reactionary and ill-considered" but most other criticisms from within the profession seemed always to be outweighed by some grovelling preface about how beneficial it was that the Prince had raised the level of the debate in the first place.

In fact the initial speech and half a dozen more delivered by the Prince between February, 1985 and March, 1988 might now be seen to have actually lowered the level of debate while raising the temperature in which it was conducted. In a series of often emotionally worded speeches, Charles blamed architects. He blamed planners and developers. He blamed the philosophical approach of Mies van der Rohe (Martin Pawley notes with glee that he was present at the RIBA when he says Charles claimed to have read Mies van der Rohe's book; there are no Mies van der Rohe books). He jocularly praised the Luftwaffe for at least not replacing the bits of London they had knocked down with anything more offensive than rubble. He had, in his own words, "the greatest possible fun" doing all this, despite an apparent moment of self-doubt after some hostile counter-criticism in 1987 ("I don't need to do all this... I sometimes wonder why I don't pack it in and spend my time playing polo..." Charles the Petulant!).

However, when the rhetoric and the sometimes enjoyable metaphors were stripped away, the inescapable truth was that Prince Charles really liked only old buildings. ("He has," noted Peter Ahrends, "a rather nostalgic view of buildings, as if they grow out of the Earth, a view of life no longer with us.") In addition he knew little about the subject and was using royal prerogative in an increasingly cavalier fashion to support schemes which reflected his own hazily-researched views. Particularly memorable was his dismissal of a Plessey semi-conductor factory he was opening in Plymouth; an excellent building, ideally designed for its purpose and well-located, it was airily dubbed "a Victorian prison". Charles the Philistine!

During all this Rod Hackney was ascending surprisingly rapidly towards the Presidency of the RIBA, impelled there largely by the royal friendship. That friendship almost foundered at one point when, in the wake of a series of inner-city riots in October, 1985, Hackney took it on himself to vouchsafe his royal friend's alleged worries to a reporter on the *Manchester Evening News*. The story was syndicated to the *London Evening Standard* and Hackney was quoted as affirming that Charles did not want to become king of a divided Britain characterised by disenfranchised minorities, no-go areas and round-the-clock riots. Although the gaffe was Hackney's, it was the image of the monarchy which was again dented by association. Ambitious and pragmatic, Hackney survived the incident and in 1986, in a mild sensation, he successfully challenged the RIBA council's choice for president. If anything the "Divided Britain" affair had

endorsed Hackney's newsworthiness while the presidency partly transferred the focus of popular attention to him.

This, surely, was the time for Prince Charles to withdraw from the debate. Instead he continued to use every opportunity to criticise architects and to influence planning procedures. In December, 1987 he decried not only all the seven finalists in a private competition for the Pater-noster Square redevelopment, but also the competition brief itself. What *he* would have liked to see, was "a roofscape that gives the impression that St Paul's is floating above it like a great ship on the sea. I would also like to see the sort of materials that Wren might have used—soft red brick and stone dressing, perhaps, and the ornament and detail of classical architecture." No doubt in the shadow of the great ship, yuppies would toil all day at the kind of computers Wren might have used before returning to their Palladian mansions in Milton Keynes.

While Charles continued to make speeches like that, Rod Hackney occasionally popped up on television asserting things like "The most discerning people in the world are the clients... the least discerning are fellow architects who say 'it's nice, it's pretty, it gets an award'. That's simply taste, opinion that in a decade will be forgotten." And to think they made all that fuss about Wren!

The comic inconsistencies, the constitutional tightrope-walking, the misapprehensions, the career-building and the politicking which have surrounded the royal interest in architecture are difficult to ignore. Michael Manser now says of Charles: "He mustn't assume he represents a wide public interest. I don't think he realises how excited the public get about a really good modern building like Lloyds or Pompidou. His view of architecture is desperately narrow—it stops at the point where anything modern starts."

Antony Holden suggests: "I think it's a mistake for him to attack individual architects or buildings. He doesn't realise the effect and power that his remarks have—and at times he exceeds the bounds of his office by this process of appointing himself a kind of supreme national planning officer with the power to veto buildings before the public's even had a chance to look at them."

Martin Pawley endorses the last point: "If a scheme is approved by Prince Charles, it goes through planning without any trouble—that can't be a good thing. But most worrying is simply the level of his ignorance about the purpose and the function of a building."

Finally Maxwell Hutchinson, front-runner for the next president of the RIBA, sums up for the profession: "Given that there are 28,000 architects in this country, there are a proportion who feel that practising the Rod Hackney way is a worthwhile thing to do. But when our own president is seen to be aligning himself with a peculiar classical criticism of the profession, it is worrying. It would be very damaging, not only to the architectural health of this country, but to its image abroad and the aspirations of our economy if we started to build the kind of architecture which Prince Charles would have us build." Charles the Abandoned ■



Above, St Paul's: Charles's vision of the City of the future? Below, Lloyds, preferred by many architects



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Surely this was high society. No other section of society would have a party covered by a television crew dressed up in dinner jackets. There were five of them: a cameraman, a sound recorder, a lighting man, a man with an extra long microphone and a clipboard man. Strung together by wires and disabled by their equipment they progressed slowly round the tables like a modern version of Bruegel's *Blind Leading the Blind*.

Lady Rothermere's party was not easy for them. It was dark and very loud (Lady Rothermere insists on candlelight and the irresistible rhythm of Lester Lannin's band). The clipboard man, a very agitated individual had great difficulty in relaying messages up the line of head-phone wearers. "For Christ's sake, Jack, tell Frank to point the bloody camera over there. It's Joan Collins. She's kissing that man with the tan. Oh, for heaven's sake it's George Hamilton." Frank turned the camera on Joan Collins and George Hamilton who gave their weariest this is the price-of-fame smiles.

What they said will never be known for Jack and Frank's colleagues were still pointing their equipment elsewhere. The clipboard man started to tap the recorder feverishly on the shoulders but was prevented from more serious violence by the appearance of Mr and Mrs Bryan Ferry. This time the crew were ready, however the Ferrys had already given short shift to the newspaper photographers who were also parolling this party. They sank low in their seats causing the cameraman to crouch. At this point the lights went and Mr and Mrs Ferry returned to the anonymity of the Lady Rothermere's candlelight.

What was the camera crew doing at the wedding ball of Lady Rothermere's daughter? One older guest offered the theory that it was taking footage for some spirited attack on the filthy rich for Channel Four. Others surmised that they were simply making an expensive version of the home video which would be cut and edited so that Lady Rothermere would be able to see every delicious moment of her evening. A third and rather more bizarre theory was provided by a man in foppish cravat: "It clearly belongs to Joan Collins. She's probably got a personal masseur, a hairdresser, a dresser and make-up artist. Why not a camera crew on tap to record their efforts?"

Was this high society? Certainly there were many thousands of pounds spent: What must have been the largest marquee in South-East England had been erected and beautifully decorated with young silver birch saplings: Champagne flowed (even if it was not the same sort that followed Lady Rothermere with a butler)



DAVID JONES



From top:
Lady Rothermere; The Duke and Duchess of Marlborough; Bryan and Lucille Ferry; Joan Collins and Susan Sangster; The Dukes of Beaufort and Marlborough. Left: Lady Sarah Armstrong-Jones and Lady Glenconner

REXFESTURES ALPHA

Henry Porter
journeys into the social interior of London and finds many different tribes.

All have some claim to be high society, but which of them is the real thing?

“the process of pinning down high society reminded me of those anthropological expeditions to find the most primitive tribe in the Amazon. Just as the explorer thinks he has found a tribe of incomparable bestiality he is told there is another, up river, who paint themselves green and eat children...”

and celebrities abounded. Over the next week the press portrayed the party as if it was the very quintessence of high society. But there again the press inclines towards the belief that anything attended by Joan Collins and her companion of the moment is bound to be high society.

Nigel Dempster, who was also there, did not offer to exercise his acute judgement in the matter. Lady Rothermere's husband is his employer. However, Dempster, a society columnist for a decade and a half, has a fairly shrewd idea about who is and who is not high society and whether, indeed, it exists at all. "Look, high society probably consists of no more than 1,000 people. There are parts of it which have been over commercialised, like Royal Ascot. But it is still there. It is discrete, quiet and, in many ways, rather boring. What newspapers want are stories about financial flailing, wife swapping, butler swapping, frivolity, naughtiness, adultery. The highest society doesn't tend to misbehave and so it doesn't tend to get covered.

"Somebody can't just elect himself a member of high society. I mean, sure, you can get to know Lord Blandford, but he's not high society. The Duke of Atholl is high society, but the Earl of Suffolk isn't (too many marriages). Jocelyn Stevens is, but Alan Sugar isn't (very new money). Lord Rotherwick is, but the Duke of Beaufort isn't (ruffish sons). The Duke of Devonshire is (although he is very naughty), but the Marquess of Bristol isn't (recent scandals). A Sainsbury or two is, but the Duke of Westminster isn't (doesn't give parties). The Duke of Marlborough is and so is the Duke of Buccleuch. He rotates between three big houses carrying his El Greco with him."

Dempster's is a traditional view of high society. It describes an aristocracy that behaves well and may be relied upon to fill certain ceremonial and social roles in the Royal Household without spilling the beans. It is a view held by many who imagine an aristocratic Olympus where duchesses and dukes exchange views on the game ball with the royal family.

There is a mythic quality in his definition which I found repeated by other people. However grand they were, whatever parties they attended, they always held on to a belief that high society was somehow impenetrable and far beyond their reach. The process of pinning it down, particularly in London, reminded me of those anthropological expeditions to find the most primitive tribe in the Amazon basin. Just as the explorer thinks he has found people of incomparable bestiality he is informed by the village elder that there is another tribe up river

that paints itself green and eats children. Anthropologists set off, locates green people, only to be told that there is another tribe deep in the jungle.

But to return to Lady Rothermere's party. Was it high society? Those alive to tiny social nuances felt that it qualified until the moment when a voice came over the address system to announce: "Excuse me ladies and gentlemen. May I have your attention please. A very serious piece of jewellery has been lost. Nobody must leave until it has been found."

To stress the gravity of the situation the voice returned to the microphone and added, "I mean this is very serious jewellery... obaaaaa?" The piece was found but not before two men had been apprehended in the car park by security guards and asked to return to the marquee where the foppish cravat had predicted the imminent arrival of Hercule Poirot.

Two parties which most certainly passed every possible test for taste, style and snobbery were given by Lady Elizabeth Anson, the managing director of a company called Party Planners. They were held after the weddings of Prince Charles and the Duke of York at Charingdest Hotel, Mayfair. Dempster thinks that the two guests just which were strikingly similar represented the distilled essence of high society.

There is some vagueness about how these parties were organised. The general belief is that the Queen used Lady Elizabeth, her cousin, as a cover so that she could throw and attend the sort of relaxed benedictions that were needed. Lady Elizabeth responded by finding pretexts which it must be said seem pretty thin. On the day that Prince Charles was married she discovered, delight of delights, that she could celebrate 21 years of Party Planners and on the day of the Duke of York's wedding, 26 years. That the crowned heads of Europe were all in town with nothing to do on the two evenings was a happy coincidence.

Communications from the palace to insiders like Lady Elizabeth are relayed in the sort of unintelligible semaphore that precedes price changes on the rails at Windsor racecourse. What Buckingham Palace was saying was this. "You will give the party and invite those who should be invited and also some of your original but discreet friends. Those not invited will therefore be cross with you and not with the Queen. The occasion should be elegant but not too formal, as if the Queen were running it herself, which of course she won't be."

The two parties were interesting, not only because a big coloured trombones playing at the second party was mistaken for the King of



Angus and Marina Ogilvy



Michael White



Nigel Dempster and Ned Ryan

6 there are still
people who won't
ask their hair-
dressers to parties,
... the Duke
of Marlborough,
for instance
he certainly
wouldn't ask his
hairdresser... Do
you get my gist? 9

Tonga and a member of continental monarchy was taken for a waiter, but also because they established what high society was. No longer was it simply the descendants of the Tudor meritocracy and of the 19th century industrial barons milling round in a court.

Lady Elizabeth like her brother, the Earl of Lichfield, is a workaholic. She has the knowing but also no-nonsense air that can be found in the hunting field or that once ran the British raj in India. She is an extraordinarily efficient person, who is capable of running seven parties at seven different locations on the same evening.

At first she said she doubted whether high society still existed. "But you know 12 years ago, maybe it was more, perhaps in the sixties, people started to ask their hairdressers to parties. Certainly there are still people who won't ask their hairdressers to a party, the Duke of Marlborough for instance, he certainly wouldn't ask his hairdresser... Do you get my gist?"

Lady Elizabeth uses many phrases like "do you get my gist?" They serve to cut short a sentence which she feels may be veering towards an unacceptable level of snobbery. "I mean, take the Docklands Ball," (a very rich white tie event held for charity, which I had mentioned) "there is a difference between that and high society. High society still gets its jewellery out of the bank... and it's sort of old jewellery. Old dirty diamonds. It doesn't spell money. It's just there and it's worth a great deal of money, probably more than the new stuff.

"It's much less obvious although it may be very, very big. Are you following me?"

"But things have changed you know. People used to think it was terribly vulgar to talk about business. The other thing you never said to your hostess was 'goodness, that was a delicious dinner', because it was expected to be delicious. And of course you were never meant to take presents when you went to stay with someone... do you see what I'm getting at?"

In her view the royal family is probably still the quiet epicentre of high society, but she recognises that there are different circles in London which resemble the sort of high societies that are found in New York and Paris. She drew the Olympic symbol in the air with her cigarette hand: "It's like that you see. There are the movers and shakers (they shake hands and move on, ha ha). Lord Weidenfeld would be one of those and there is cafe society [Michael White the impresario], there are the literati [Lady Antonia Fraser] and so forth. All these circles of people interlock. Now, there is a bit of the mix that goes right to the top."

What follows from this is that there is much more opportunity for social climbing, the sort of ambitious, wealth-driven rise that is facilitated in New York by public relations companies. Lady Elizabeth is alert to social climbers and she refuses to sell her lists or any way smooth the path of the ambitious. "Atchley (all those interviewed pronounce actually like this) I get rather stuffy about this. I say to people: 'Here is Debretts, you can write out the invitations yourself.' Occasionally I send people an invitation to a

lunch, but only when I know they feel they can throw it in the waste-paper basket."

There are companies here who do engineer introductions and invitations for a fee, but they are not as important, or powerful as the New York equivalents. One recently landed itself in trouble with a section of London's high society for taking on an American client who used the parties to contact the rich. He relieved several of thousands of pounds, departed for the States and has not been heard of since.

It is odd how many people talk as if the introduction of the hairdressers into high society was solely responsible for the dilution of the purity of aristocratic life. The hairdresser has become shorthand for the great change that high society experienced in the 1960s, the relaxation of an unbending class system, the penalties levied on inherited wealth under Harold Wilson's Labour government, the general air of possibility and excitement which seem to mock the old conventions. British high society goes through periods of experimentation and rigidity but the 60s praised talent however ephemeral and that has had a lasting effect.

The 50s had been remarkably staid and cautious. There was a formal deb circuit in which the women were expected to find suitable husbands. Men at parties were expected to dance with their hostesses and the women they had sat with at dinner. There was a much stronger code of behaviour than in the 30s which on the whole were more daring and cosmopolitan. The Mitfords danced through the decade, Waugh chronicled it and a woman named Mrs Corrigan bought it. (She gave each of her dinner party guests a little something from Cartiers). The same liveliness of spirit infected society during Edward VII's reign which contrasted with the air of mournful disapproval of Queen Victoria's.

But it is a mistake to think that what happens in London immediately affects the behaviour of the aristocracy in the country. Landed nobles can be remarkably independent in their behaviour, indeed some are downright isolationist and do anything to avoid high society. There are still many versions of Lord Emsworth sitting on the big estates. Take this proprietor of one of England's great houses. When his son arrived back after several years in Australia all the old boy could muster in the way of a greeting was this: "What are they saying in Sevenoaks?"

What the hairdresser symbolises is the arrival of the charming, commercial-minded parvenu. As Lady Elizabeth says, "There are the right sort of people and there are amusing people."

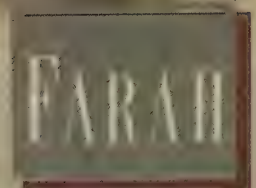
It seems unfair on the hairdressing fraternity since interior decorators are far more common in high society. At one point during this expedition I wondered whether I had not simply happened upon a tribe of designers, a people of chintz fetishes, house gods and a curious reverence for objets d'art. People who say things like "I have got just the thing for you back at the shop. A plaster cast of a foot. It would look so amusing on the card table over by the bay... don't you think?" People who end every statement of opinion with a question that makes a client

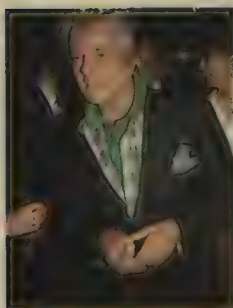
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Nicholas Haslam



Lady Victoria Waymouth



Lords Lichfield and Saurdon

He listed what sounded like a number of County Cricket fixtures—Somerset, Gloucester, Northampton—they were people who had attended a recent party

believe that it is his or her decision, not the decorator's.

The fact is many of those who swim in the high society are preoccupied or occupied by decorating. They either decorate or are decorated.

Nicky Haslam is a member of the first group and he is generally regarded as one of the most amusing elements of high society. Nicky's repartee at a dinner party could raise the dead. He is like a hover-fly at parties, giving his complete attention to one attraction and then moving with remarkable speed to another. His conversation is of the mildly wicked, mildly flirtatious variety. He is easy on the female eye since he dresses with careful understatement.

Haslam is the British equivalent of the famous American "walker" Jerry Zipkin as the magazine *House and Garden* pointed out recently. "He's like Jerry in that he's an indefatigable organiser involving people going to things. Like Jerry he has no trouble reaching people." (Indeed, he has decorated for Princess Aly Khan, Princess Michael of Kent, Charles Saatchi and Sir James Goldsmith.) *HG* magazine revealed that Nicky was setting up shop in the States and approached Jerry Zipkin for a quote, presumably in the hope of some competitive caterwauling. Instead they were given this mystifying comment: "I am thrilled Nicky's coming. I am worn out on my own."

Naturally he says that he is not a member of high society. "I mean I don't go to those parties that Jennifer's *Diary* talks about. (The inoffensive feature in *Harpers & Queen* that records the genteel odyssey of Betty Kenwood each month.) I mean, I don't know the Duke of Grafton... I am not a member of that sub court set... that whig society, if you like." This is unconvincing. On the wall of Haslam's shop in Chelsea there are black and white photographs showing him hovering over the Queen Mother, Princess Michael of Kent and Joan Collins.

He was one of the few people to attend the Aga Khan's well-publicised ball at Chantilly, near Paris and he was also asked to Claridges for the "Anson" party. "Yes, I suppose it is true that Liz's party did kind of represent high society, but the point is that it has changed a great deal in the last 20 or so years... it used to be so rigid and scary. Now it's jollier, less hidebound and more fluent."

Not everything changes though. During our conversation he was called to the telephone. In response to a question he listed what sounded like a number of County Cricket match fixtures—Somerset, Gloucester, Northampton etc. In fact they were the names of people attending a party he had just been to. In Haslam's world people are still called after counties, even if they no longer own them.

Haslam's great social ally is another decorator named Melissa Wyndham. She is funny, unpompous and unmade-up and doubtless a great contributor to what Haslam calls the "morning telephone life of high society". She agreed that London high society had changed. She did not know much about the country life for as she put

it: "A lot of those people in those grand houses are, to be absolutely honest pretty dank. Yes, they're very dank."

"In London anything goes now... wouldn't you agree. It's geared round stylish people, clever, amusing people. In France it is frightfully snobbish and in America its geared round money." She agrees with Lady Victoria Waymouth, yet another interior decorator, that London has become cosmopolitan and relaxed. Rolling Stones, architects, explorers, writers, financiers all meet.

Melissa Wyndham, however, believes that there is still much climbing. "There are people who would give their eye teeth to be on the board of Covent Garden or a trustee of the Tate Gallery. There are many successful businessmen, chairmen of companies, who are propelled by their wives. The wives get their homes decorated and start getting on charity ball committees. Goodness knows why they bother with it all... perhaps they want to ask Lord Carrington to dinner or something."

"There are heaps of ways of social climbing, some people do it by getting in the art world and buying a lot of pictures. Others go and buy a lot of horses and get into the racing world... though I can't imagine the fun of that." What she did not say was that practically all of them do up their homes which is why there are so many decorators about.

The last call on this journey was to Lady Rothermere's flat in Eaton Square. This was important because Lady Rothermere has joined an international set and now has homes in Paris, New York and San Francisco. Having freed herself, as it were, from the parochial scene of London society, she is now better able to comment on it.

There was some time to reflect on a high society in Lady Rothermere's drawing room, since the maid had announced that her ladyship was unavoidably detained on the other side of her apartment. She made it sound as if there was a traffic jam between the bedroom and drawing room. There was time to read the Lady R's impressive array of invitations and also to look over the black and white photographs that chronicled Lady R's social success—Lady R with the Queen Mother, Lady R peeping over the Queen's shoulder, Lady R with film stars, Lady R with Princess Michael of Kent and so on.

Eventually she arrived wearing a white robe and a large jewelled cross.

She looked like a high priestess who was about to wring the neck of a cockerel. Instead she walked across the room, turned on the television and began to watch a cookery programme. In between the stages that go to make up an Irish stew she confirmed what the previous interviewees had said. Then suddenly, she said: "Well, you must know what it's about—it's about high achievers, staying ahead of the game, talent, making money and keeping money, that's what it's about."

Trollope would probably have put it differently, but he probably would have approved of the sentiment ■



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WHAT MAKES WINNERS AND LOSERS

A year after the financial Crash of October, 1987, who won and lost and why? What factors have influenced the performances of the great entrepreneurs in those uneasy months since the world's markets trembled?

by Stella Shamoon



Sir James Goldsmith's enormous self-confidence sets him apart from other investors

CARL MYDANS/TIME MAGAZINE

When Sir James Goldsmith sold almost all his holdings in summer, 1987—three months before the Crash—he was responding to a gut feeling, a primitive instinct which told him that the market had “gone crazy”. He even went round telling his friends to “get out, get out”.

Attempting to explain his action, Goldsmith remembers that “people kept coming to me with crazier and crazier schemes, each costing more and more, and everything was easier and easier to fund”. Something told him that the time had come to cut and run.

Few other great entrepreneurs followed his example. Rupert Murdoch, for instance, saw his family holdings decline in value by an estimated

£1 billion. Robert Holmes à Court, the Australian who had founded an empire on substantial debt, was all but wiped out. Richard Branson, who had unluckily just floated his company, Virgin, on the London Stock Exchange, said later: “No one could have predicted the Crash.” Alan Clore, the heir to the Charles Clore fortune, lost £80 million on a single bet.

There were only one or two other financiers who agreed with Goldsmith. Sir Gordon White, head of the American arm of Lord Hanson's empire, the Hanson Trust, started scaling down some of his investments and building up his cash reserves before the storm broke on Wall Street on Monday, October 19. Kerry Packer of

Australia had also sold a great many of his interests—no bad thing, for the Australian market proved to be among the worst hit.

What is interesting about all the winners and losers in the wake of the Crash is the reasons for their decisions. The information about the state of the markets was available to every one of them. But some believed that the markets would defy the laws of gravity and continue to rise, while others, notably Jimmy Goldsmith, did not. He listened less to reason than to that second sense which distinguishes the real winner from those who simply follow the crowd.

When talking about the market now, Goldsmith uses an expression that implies this second

sense. He says he no longer "feels" it. He has been remarkably prescient in the past. In 1973 he sold all his property holdings before the property crash in Britain and, in 1982, he told a conference in Los Angeles that the market was going to turn upwards after the recession. It did.

Goldsmith has always been prepared to trust his intuition, even though it may seem to contradict all the more conventional wisdom of the world's stock markets. He has made no secret, for example, that when he is considering a move in the markets he will ring up six analysts, and ask their opinions. If they all say "Sell", he buys; if they all say "Buy", he sells.

His enormous self-confidence sets him apart from other investors, even large ones like Alan Clore. Five months before last October's crash, Clore had bought Kaiser Aluminium and Chemical Corp, now named KaiserTech, for £170 million. He saw the value of his holding halved in one day; and, during the succeeding months, his bankers delayed foreclosing on his stock in the corporation. He was forced to sell the stock and to raise money by selling his 800 thoroughbred racehorses and the jewels in his collection of Impressionist paintings. He then retreated into seclusion in Paris.

Clore is no fool. He had made several astute, if sometimes opportunistic, sorties on Wall Street. And he understood the nuances of the market. But he did not have that magical element that differentiated the winners from the losers when the Crash came.

Perhaps it is the same instinct that makes a successful poker player—the ability to know when to fold, and when to press on. It is the boldness to listen to second sense.

Twelve months afterwards, how are these winners and losers placed and, more importantly, how do the chairmen of institutions and other market-makers feel about the future?

Immediately after the Crash, there was a widespread belief that the world economy would not recover, as was the case in 1929/30. In fact, it has appeared to be more resilient.

Peter Quinnen, chairman of James Capel, argues: "I do not see another October crash now. The background is different. Then there was public disarray over interest-rate policy and little co-operation among the world's industrialised nations. High levels of liquidity now limit the downside of the markets."

However, S. G. Warburg, one of London's most famous market-makers, is more reflective and worth listening to.

During the summer, this was the cautious message of Sir David Scholey, its chairman; "There is so much fog and noise coming out of the American election, and the result will make such a considerable difference to how this year and next year will develop, that it is impossible to forecast the impact.

"The balance of concern now with inflation rather than recession is due to the fact that the contesting candidates in the US election are unlikely to risk declaring an economic policy which will upset voters. Bush's declaration that he has no plans to increase taxes illustrates this factor."

He warned: "The prospect for 1989 is difficult. We are going to have to pay for the mis-



Loser Alan Clore, above, sold paintings

management of the American economy because of the election. Just as, with our current deteriorating balance of payments and higher interest rates, we are now paying for action taken to stop the Crash turning into a panic."

Scholey argued that October's Crash was not a panic. "There were a limited number of options open to the authorities—essentially, to make credit easier or to tighten it. The tax cuts in the last UK budget should be seen as part of the strategy adopted to release credit. But all the signs are now that there will be more inflation and that this will be strongly resisted by our Government at least.

"What I am concerned about is participants in the market who think they are going to be successful by some sort of instant process simply because they have lots of desks, screens and people, and develop different products and shoot these products through the system. Time and again we have seen that they cannot do everything well, and in certain areas they make up for their deficiencies by offering their services cheaper, to capture a client or to build market share. Such strategies not only often end up in losses but put us all to disadvantage by raising the alarm with the authorities."

This week the message from Scholey was the same—only more so. "The further one gets away from the summer of 87, the more surprising it is that we did not recognise then what was

Winner Goldsmith, below, trusted his intuition



J. DONOSO

He will ring six analysts.

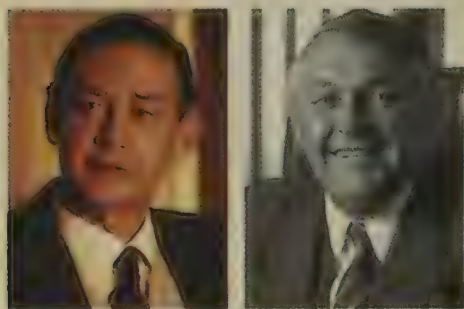
If they all say "Sell",
he buys. If they
say "Buy", he sells

happening. October was not a crash, it was a big spike that manifested itself in other markets too. 'Big Bang' euphoria was a hype operation. Now the houses that geared up too much ought really to 'de-gear'. But there is no recession in the securities industry. Volumes are back to normal patterns, while overheads have assumed a quite different dimension since Big Bang. That is why there is blood all over the floor."

Lord Hanson, one of the few really big winners, is also thoughtful about the impact of the Crash: "Financial market crashes as severe as October last can never be described as good, as national economies and individuals get hurt, but some adjustment was inevitable after many years



Goldsmith, semi-retired and worth more than \$1 billion; his energy and appetite for profit still high



Robert Holmes à Court, left, and, right, Alan Bond of rising markets. Investors are now, rightly, more cautious and everyone has been reminded that markets can go down as well as up.

"In terms of the UK equity market it is interesting to me to see the shares of a company valued more modestly than before the Crash, while the value placed on the whole company in a take-over situation is, if anything, higher than that which might have been attained before October, 1987."

What Lord Hanson is saying, rather demurely, is that the time may be approaching when the major corporate raider will once again step into the market-place. With the share prices

A year ago I would
have said
"Get the hell out".
Now I don't
know. There is both
good and bad news

Sir James Goldsmith

of the target companies low, the opportunities for major take-overs are there. Some of the immediate beneficiaries of this trend include Michael Green, the head of Carlton Communications, who has successfully taken over Technicolor in a \$780 million cash deal; Robert Maxwell, who is still pursuing the publishers Macmillan in the United States with an offer of

\$2.5 billion; and Grand Metropolitan, which has bid \$5.2 billion for the Pillsbury Corporation, again in America.

It is already clear that one raider, Alan Bond, the Australian brewer, has made a remarkable recovery. He presents a striking contrast to his countryman Robert Holmes à Court. The *Wall Street Journal* summed it up neatly in September: "Many investors world-wide were stunned when the patrician Holmes à Court—who was heavily backed by institutional investors—was done by last October's stock market crash, while Alan Bond came out just fine. What saved Mr Bond from the Crash was beer and the steady flow of cash it generates. Mr Holmes à Court had no such cash cow."

The difference in their approaches is neatly encapsulated in the fact that in September Bond Corp bought control of Bell Group Limited, former flagship of Holmes à Court's empire. This increased Bond's assets to about \$A8.7 billion.

It is not necessarily intellectual analysis which counts, therefore. Bond is generally considered at best a rough diamond, while Holmes à Court was at least complimented on his good manners. Like Jimmy Goldsmith, Bond has the crucial second sense, and persistence.

Goldsmith is one of the world's least conventional financiers. Anglo-French, he has houses in London, Paris and New York, and families in two countries—about which he does not seem in the least embarrassed. Now estimated to be worth more than £1 billion, he is building a Sultan's palace in Mexico, and says he is "semi-retired" at the age of 55. Few who know him will believe it. His energy and appetite for profit are undiminished.

In an exclusive interview with the *ILN*, Goldsmith says: "The take-over game is no longer being played by us capitalists, but by people on commission using other people's money—along with one or two megalomaniacs. I've been marginally in the stock market in New York and in Germany since May, but I buy with caution because I am not in a risk-taking mood."

"I read in the newspapers that I am about to bid for anything that moves. This is rubbish." This may refer to the *Sunday Times* which, on October 9 this year, built a case out of circumstantial evidence for Goldsmith's participation in a bid for DRG, a £540 million packaging company. DRG is a good target, but it is uncertain whether or not Goldsmith actually wants the company or is simply joining his former associate, Roland Franklin, in a move to put DRG into play. However, it does stress the increasing importance of Europe in the minds of the capitalist adventurers. In the same week that Goldsmith came to London, Joe Flom, the American lawyer and take-over expert, opened an office in the City attracted, like many Americans, by the undoubted possibilities 1992 offers.

Goldsmith, unusually, is confused about the markets in the wake of last year's Crash. "Had you asked me last year, I would have said, 'Get the hell out'. Now I don't know. There is both bad news and good news out there."

With his customary fascination for world politics, he is more than aware that a great deal hangs on the outcome of the American election.



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If I am approached by
buyers I demand tomorrow's
price. If I am offered
that, I take it

Lord Hanson



Go-go predators Stanley Kalms, left, and, centre, Tony Clegg. Right, Sir David Scholey of S.G. Warburg

"Over three or four years a Dukakis victory would be dramatically bad. He is a very dangerous, non-Marxist Lefty. His foreign policy is a disaster. But there would be no stock-market crash overnight. It would take time to digest the quite substantial changes that would come under Dukakis. Such a regime would mark the decline of the presidency, and of America."

Goldsmith argues, however, that many of America's economic problems have been solved. "Those who go on about dual deficits have ceased to think: the budget deficit as a percentage of America's gross national product is half that of Japan's. The trade deficit is coming down after the devaluation of the dollar."

Overall, Jimmy Goldsmith admits, "Things obviously look better. Shares are dirt-cheap, but businesses are very expensive. Try to buy the business and the price goes through the roof." Goldsmith is reckoned to be able to lay his hands on a war chest for a potential take-over of several billion dollars but so far he has not used it.

Lord Hanson is in the same position, with an estimated £500-£600 million of free cash flow per year. Hanson explains that he, too, has not embarked on new take-overs in the wake of the Crash because, "while shares are valued modestly, companies are valued highly. We've been able to sell businesses off at high prices since the Crash, but we do not want to buy at these levels.

"We go for conglomerates and sort them out. Some parts we sell—at ridiculous premiums. But breakups are not our essential strategy. They are opportunities, and we have taken them. If I am approached by buyers I demand tomorrow's price, with a consideration built in to cover capital gains liability. If I am offered that, I take it."

Goldsmith and Hanson contrast vividly with some of the "go-go" predators of 1986, like the property developer Tony Clegg of Mountleigh, Stanley Kalms of the electronics retailer Dixons, and Tony Berry of the job-agency group Blue Arrow. None of these had the cash mountain of a Goldsmith or a Hanson. Having financed their ambitions with borrowings and new share issues, they found themselves beached without the necessary readies. They are losers.

Branson is probably somewhere between being a winner and a loser. He said: "Markets have become more volatile with frequent swings of currencies and interest rates which complicate the planning of any international business. It is my intention to take Virgin Group private and we have recently offered 140p for the company which is a premium of nearly 70 per cent to the year's low share price of 83p. I no longer perceive the equity market to be the best way to raise capital because of its instability and the changed priorities which fund managers now face. However, my confidence, in the future of our business world-wide remains unshaken."

If a lesson can be learned from the last year it is that the winners after the Crash have been those who have had the courage to retreat, the sense to admit that they are confused—like Goldsmith—and the judgement—like Hanson—not to join the feverish take-over scramble. In the post-Crash world, discretion is the better part of valour ■

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As your happy Christmas draws nearer, please think of those whose hearts are filled with fear and loneliness. With your help now, we can still bring many of them tidings of comfort and perhaps even a little joy.

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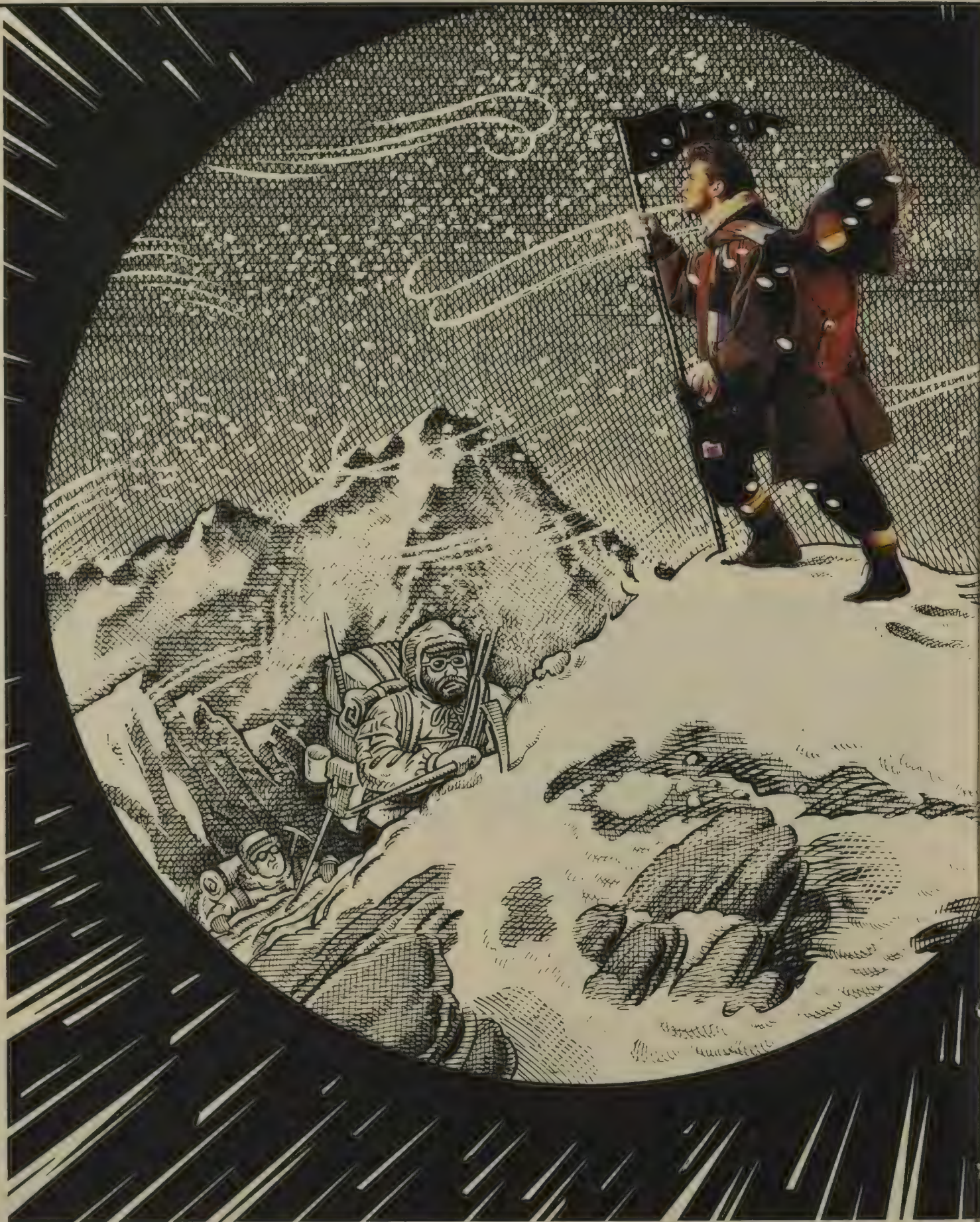
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the age of PARODY

How will the 80s be remembered?
An examination of our current obsession with style
by **Gilbert Adair**

Consider the wing-collar. Though it made its first appearance with men's formal evening wear in the latter half of the 19th century, the wing-collar is most associated with the 1920s—of which decade it has become, along with cocktails and boyishly flat chests, one of the characteristic emblems. I recall, from adolescence, being made aware of it through the old black-and-white Hollywood movies which I devoured on television; and also, even more vividly, through the Thomas Henry line drawings illustrating the *Just William* books, in which the hero's despised elder brother Robert was to be seen fitted out in his lounge-lizard frippery: flawlessly tailored dinner-clothes, patent leather pumps, soft, black silk bow-tie and starched wing-collar.

By the Second World War the wing-collar had been replaced by the now conventional kind, though it hung on for a time, gracing the necks of the dowdier sorts of chartered accountants and solicitors at their firms' annual dinner-dances, looking increasingly dated and drab. Then, in the early 1970s, it enjoyed an unexpected revival among film stars, debs' escorts and the trendy media Bohemia. It was at that moment it became a mannerist or, as we now say, post-modern item of clothing, a deliberate allusion to the 1920s and meant to be perceived as such. By plugging himself into that newly-fashionable period, the wearer hoped to send out the signal that he had a natural affinity with a nostalgically glamorous yet somehow timeless ideal of wit and frivolity. If he could not dance like Fred Astaire, write like Scott Fitzgerald, talk like Jean Cocteau or afford to sit in a Le Corbusier-designed chair, that little fetish of his wing-collar would at least permit him, fleetingly, to imagine that he could.

This example may seem trivial but it is not isolated. In the haemorrhage of images typical of contemporary culture the past (mostly the recent past) has been turned into a mammoth lucky dip. All you have to do, if you are a maker of television commercials or pop videos, a designer of record sleeves, the editor of *The Face*, an architect, a painter or even a marketing entrepreneur, is plunge in and scoop out whatever happens to answer your particular need. With the decades mingling indiscriminately (the "recent past" is that which is divisible by decades, not centuries), nothing any longer seems outmoded or dated.

The wing-collar has become so ubiquitous that it is now the conventional kind that looks dated and drab. If it still carries a vaguely 20s

connotation, its diffusion through the glitzier end of our culture (films, commercials, fashion journals, etc) has become so complete that no one any longer comments on it. Because so much of the past has been seamlessly integrated into our present life-styles, a solitary throwback to the 20s like the wing-collar can hardly be expected to jar on our sense of period or to impress us as an anachronism.

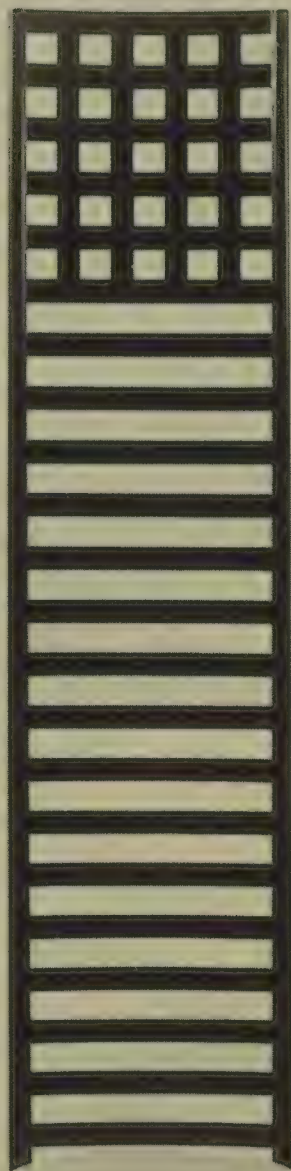
Perhaps the neatest encapsulation of such nostalgic window-shopping is provided by the cycle of Holstein lager commercials that plays on the ingenious juxtaposition of genuine monochrome footage from Hollywood movies of the 40s and 50s and "counterfeit" footage featuring the comedian Griff Rhys Jones, filmed today but faked so that the joins are barely visible. What makes these post-modern is the way the old, transplanted footage is accorded temporal "equality" with the commercial's present tense, so that a shot (of Rhys Jones) and its reaction shot (of, say, Gary Cooper in *High Noon*) may be separated by 40 years of film history.

That is what post-modernism is all about. Instead of exploring new and uncharted territory—which is, after all, what artists have always been supposed to do—the post-modernist repeats what has been done before, but knowingly, even derisively. He disclaims any obligation to create for the future and demeans, however "affectionately", the art of the past. He drains that art of its content and retains only its glossy, superficial coating of style. He reduces all art to an *exercice de style*. And to make his work accessible to both the consumerist appetites and diminished attention-span of what might be

Instead of exploring new and uncharted territory, the post-modernist repeats what has been done before, but knowingly, even derisively. He disclaims any obligation to create for the future and demeans, however "affectionately", the art of the past



A Sharp QT50
radio evokes nostalgia for the 50s;
below, Charles
Rennie Mackintosh 80s Imitation





German Expressionism in Glasgow: Alan Watson



Boyer and Bergman stills now sell phones



High Noon or high camp? Griff Rhys Jones confronts Gary Cooper in the Holstein lager TV commercials



Forward-straining in the Stalinist style: students for NatWest. Capitalism borrows from Russia



The Porsche 50s Speedster, haunted by the ghost of James Dean, now improved and "re-released"



The hippy look revived by the designer Lacroix

termed the fast-forward generation, he operates most happily within the limits imposed by the pop promo or TV ad, whose primary virtue is to tell a story in a matter of minutes and whose primary function is that quintessentially 80s one of selling something.

Like a good Thatcherite, the post-modernist is in a sense privatising history and art. An eerie example of the process is the current series of leaflets issued by the NatWest Bank to attract student customers. The irony is that, to entice young people into the capitalist fold, the bank has co-opted the muscular realism of Stalin's Russia—the most anti-capitalist art one could possibly imagine.

On occasion this pawing over the past attains a truly macabre dimension. As though to demonstrate how new wine will taste better if poured into an old bottle. Porsche has lately "re-released" the 1950s Speedster model whose claim to notoriety is that it was the automobile in which James Dean killed himself—at the same time prudently removing the sting from its more deadly associations by introducing such 80s improvements as a four-wheel drive system.

The paradox is not merely that, once more, nothing is made to appear quite so bang-up-to-the-minute as the past but that, for their money, the Speedster's purchasers are getting a car that has been authenticated, as it were, by a fatal accident (this is the star-system at work with a vengeance, for the crucial factor is that the accident happened to a celebrity). Less bizarre is the re-introduction of the Volvo sports car, familiar from the television series *The Saint* and inextricably linked with the early 60s: its familiar exterior also conceals all the latest engineering.

The United States has been an inexhaustible fount of post-modern inspiration, so much so that the British fascination with all things American, once exclusively confined to a select few of the country's more glittery attractions (cars, movies, starchy role models, etc), has now been extended to encompass what for many Americans themselves represent much less obviously appealing aspects.

Rare is the artistic expression of the past that

The British fascination with all things American, once confined to a select few of the country's more glittery attractions, has now been extended to encompass what for many Americans represent much less obviously appealing aspects

has not been artificially re-gilded or else pulverised into £1,000 glinting particles by the inflationary, insatiable image-spinning of the present. It may be no more serious than the reprise of advertising motifs and logos that had previously been dropped because of undesirably *passé* connotations—the Bisto Kids and the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer lion lately restored to their full, pre-war, glowingly kitsch splendour—or it may be the injection of a shrill populism into a form as allegedly elitist as opera.

Take the case of *Aria*, a recent portmanteau film made up of individually-selected numbers from a dozen operas, each visualised by a different director (Jean-Luc Godard, Robert Altman, Ken Russell and so on). What did it matter that any given episode bore much the same relationship to the masterpiece from which it was extracted as a wine gum bears to a bottle of vintage Châteauneuf-du-Pape? The point was that by being fragmented in this way, a handful of long and "boring" operas had been magically transformed into short, snappy opera promos, with their composers' original intentions, all those tedious choruses and recitatives, ending up on the cutting-room floor.

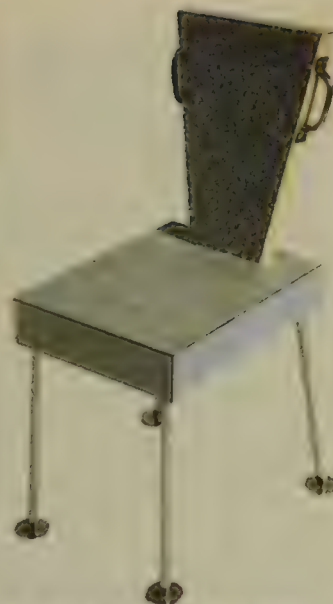
And so one could go on: from the dreamy bistros—neither wholly American nor wholly British, neither wholly of the past nor wholly of the present—which play so predominant a role in the advertising of soft drinks and non-alcoholic lagers, to an obsession with the Raj that is only now receding; from the endless musical revivals crowding the West End to the ruthlessly systematic appropriation by book-jacket designers of a certain, pallidly Impressionist school of British painters. (In the Tate Gallery I once heard a woman remark to her companion, as they squinted at a murky gaslit Sickert: "That would make an awfully nice Virago cover".) The Post Modern Movement—if movement it is—has gradually infiltrated every vacant pocket of our lives and lifestyles. It affects everything from "high culture" painting and architecture to the output of the lowliest product designer.

The question is often less of style than of packaging, less of self-expression than of enveloping the object, idea or individual to be sold in a roseate nostalgic glow as dubiously chemical as a maraschino cherry. Hence the enduring and now international taste for the Laura Ashley school which, not content merely to mass-market a style of fabrics and furnishings whose very cachet was once that it could *not* be industrialised, also contrives to effect an instantaneously faded quality that further serves to camouflage the manufacturing processes. Hence, too, the related fad for boutiques purveying soaps, powders, salts and crystals whose labels evoke a tradition stretching back to the now-modish but infamously grubby Victorians.

Indeed, the imperial, flag-waving, "Buy



The Saint rides again courtesy of Volvo, one more repro auto



50s chair from the Memphis group



The typical 80s photograph: Bright Young Things on Lloyd Loom chairs in a highly incongruous setting



The dansant on Burgh Island, striving for elegance



Marti Sitbon, spring 88. A back-to-the-60s look



Lacroix, spring 88. More plundering of the past



Elle magazine's mannish "Bloomsbury Girl"



80s design mimics 20s futurism: the Metro Radio



Marie-Claire's revival of the comic-strip image



The 300TE Petrol. 0-62 mph 8.8 seconds, top speed 130 mph manufacturer's figures. 250TD Diesel 29.7 mpg in urban cycle, 48.7 mpg at constant 56 mph and 36.2 mpg at 75 mph

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At first it may seem difficult to comprehend how the T-series can encompass virtues associated with not only a luxury car but also a functional estate. Difficult, that is, until you remember it is first of all a Mercedes-Benz.

Unlike most estate cars, driving a T-series is not akin to pushing a shoebox against the wind. Its slippery shape is devoid of unnecessary adornment and the lack of wind noise is self-evident as it accelerates with smooth, effortless energy to reach its cruising speed in a matter of seconds.

Only the cavernous loadspace in the rear will remind the T-series driver that it is indeed an estate car. With the rear seat folded down, over six feet of fully usable flat-floored space is provided.

And even with the loadspace completely occupied, the multi-link rear suspension system, incorporating a self-levelling device, maintains the car's composure and results in a relentlessly sure grip and smooth ride.

VERSATILITY IN NUMBERS

There are five models in the range. Top performers are the three litre 300TE and the new 300TE 4-matic (which has the sophisticated Mercedes-Benz

automatically engaging four-wheel-drive system). Their six cylinder 188 DIN/hp power units deliver lively acceleration and high top speed. While at low speeds they can

draw on massive reserves of torque which reaches a maximum of 191 lb/ft.

The 230TE is no slouch either. Its 2.3 litre single ohc, fuel injected, four cylinder engine makes it much sought after, as is the four cylinder 2 litre 200T. The most economical T-series is the one that doesn't use petrol at all. The diesel powered 250TD has an engine so refined the uninitiated might not even be able to tell it's a diesel.

All share a range of safety features, invented by Mercedes-Benz, not least of which are the energy absorbing crumple zones with rigid passenger cell and electronic seat-belt tensioners for front seats.

PRACTICALLY BACK TO FRONT

You expect an estate car to be versatile but how versatile should you expect a Mercedes-Benz to be? The T-series will not disappoint you. It is a car that has a generous amount of everything you need: loads of space and long-distance comfort; a full measure of driving enjoyment and exclusive features.

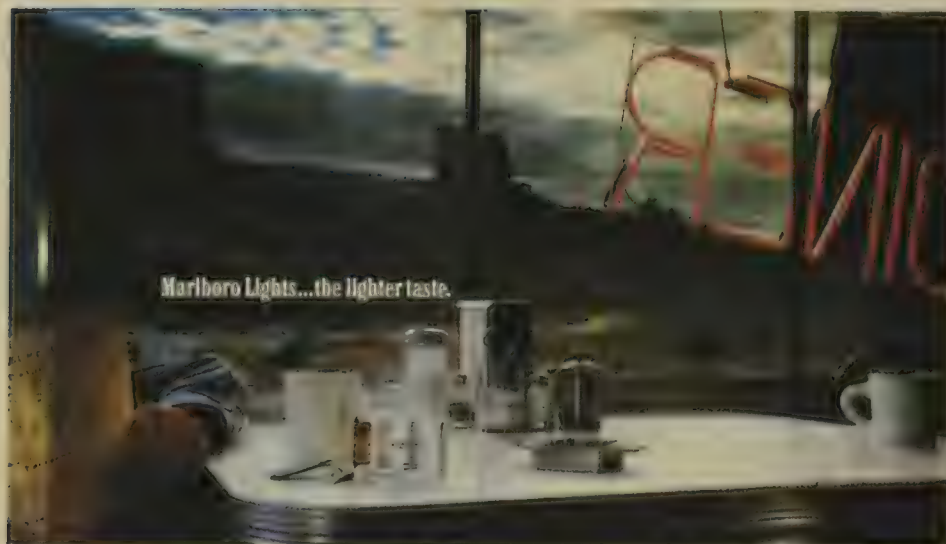
Example: the large, wide-opening tailgate glides on two gas-filled struts and is assisted by an ingenious electro-mechanical mechanism that moves the lowered tailgate to a fully closed position and locks it without slamming.

The front passenger seat fully reclines and the rear seat divides so that both or either of the two sections can be folded forward. This provides five different variations for small loads, big loads and awkward shapes.

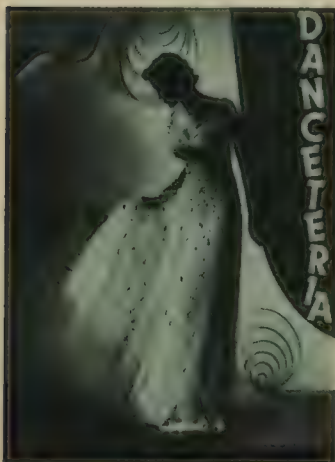
With the optional, rear-facing, third row of seats, there is accommodation for up to five adults and two children. So while you drive around in your estate, the rest of the family sit in the luxury of a Mercedes-Benz.

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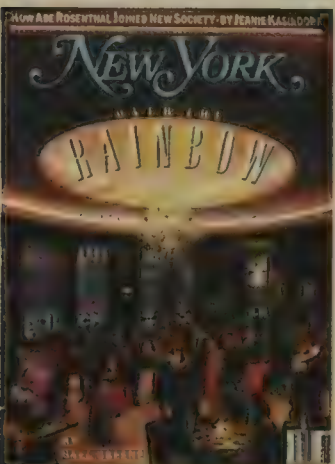
The urbanisation of Marlb0ro advertising is heavily influenced by Edward Hopper paintings



Danceteria, the exclusive New York



club, promotes itself as "innovative"



Sweet and Twenties in Manhattan



Brilliantined shoes for Young Fogeys. Post-modernism shines



Demure 30s styles come back. Anything goes in current fashion

British" mystique, though frayed from over-indulgence, lingers gamely on: in films (*Hope and Glory*), plays (the smash-flop musical *Winnie*), clothes and mannerisms (the Young Fogey movement), political rhetoric and rituals (the Falklands Factor) and, of course, all those marmalades, cornflakes and deerstalker caps whose lucky manufacturers have been authorised to stamp a microscopic yet somehow still glaringly prominent royal coat-of-arms on the daily harvest of their production lines.

As the world of fashion, by its very nature, has always been a ravenous plunderer of the past, it cannot be considered a strictly post-modern phenomenon, though there have been a few occasions when, by exceeding its natural brief, it has struck a rather sinister post-modern attitude. There was, for instance, the rash Parisian couturier who, to set off to advantage a line of expensively frumpy flower-patterned dresses inspired by newsreel footage of the Occupation years, had his models' heads shaved in outstandingly tasteless mimicry of the way accounts were summarily squared with women collaborators. Our own designers have been more circumspect (or perhaps have simply been deprived by historical circumstances of the opportunity to exploit a chic flirtation with Fascism). But here, too, nearly every value, tradition and artifact of what used to be called "our common heritage" risks being recycled as a stylised and brilliantined parody of itself.

I say "brilliantined" because it is in the very nature of the post-modern object to *shine*. (The Laura Ashley faded look is the exception that proves the rule.) For the post-modernist any texture not polished to a high-gloss sheen, any image that does not glint as though licked clean, would have the incongruous rawness of a woman's unstockinged legs glimpsed beside others sheathed in nylon.

A revealing instance of the post-modern infatuation with surfaces is Jean-Jacques Beineix's spangly and influential thriller *Diva*, whose hi-tech style has become the Art Deco of the 80s. *Diva* is what might be regarded as a *fin de siècle* movie, with all the decadent 90s—even Wildean—connotations that such a gallicism implies. It was Beineix's obvious intention to dazzle the spectator. Fair enough. But just as Wilde, in his generally feeble verse, sought to evoke an atmosphere of luxuriance and precosity by the naïve expedient of accumulating as many precious and luxuriant words as possible, so Beineix's film dazzles in an exclusively literal, ocular fashion. It splinters the screen into as many brilliant, reflecting surfaces as it can reasonably contain—mirrors, blazing automobile headlamps and shiny aluminium "design" furniture.

What is particularly instructive about *Diva* is the exemplary ease with which the post-modern predilection for style without substance takes its place within the context of a *fin de siècle*. In reality,



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AND THEN
THERE'S
LAPHROAIG.



In any collection, there is only one masterpiece. And when it comes to malts, there's nothing to match the unique

rich smokey taste of Laphroaig.



Today's drinks are on the (Bau)haus



Suburban chintz restored to favour

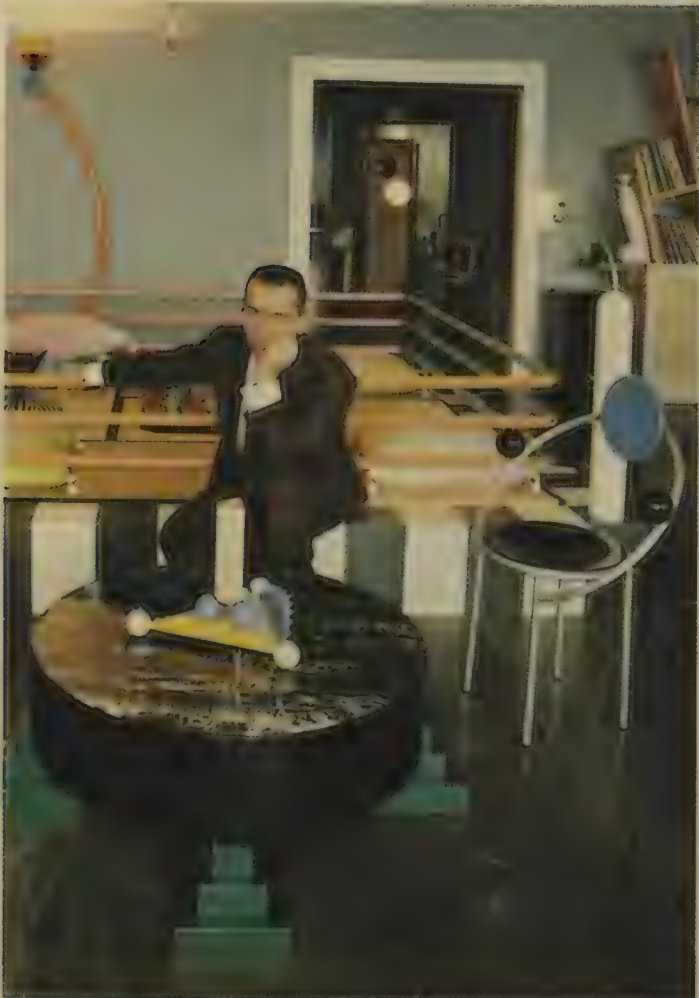


DEFINITELY NOT US.

US magazine rejects (but evokes) the vulgarity and prurience of *National Enquirer*



Colourful classicism by John Outram: a pumping station in Docklands



Couturier Karl Lagerfeld in his studio, furnished by the Memphis company



The "anti-sofa", a totem of Ital Art, seemingly not built for any human shape

50s

Fifties femininity (page 51), hat and gloves obligatory. The plaidie wrap-around number, curled stockings, specs, all-in-one powder compact with lipstick holder, clutch purse, mirror and comb.

60s

No flowers in her hair, but her hairdressing is really swinging. Comments: make-up bag, chair and Pirelli's best stockings - and the whole lot single.



Operation Op Art: a spread from *YOU* magazine plays with Bridget Riley's ideas



The menacing 50s winklepicker is rendered innocuous in period advertising



Miranda Richardson portrays the 50s icon Ruth Ellis

it is not merely the end of a century that the world is fast approaching but the end of a millennium; and even if we all know what "millennium" means, it is worth reminding ourselves that this is something which has not happened to mankind for 1,000 years.

Historically, the tag-ends of centuries (and millennia all the more so) have tended to concentrate the human mind on various kinds of Armageddon. In which case post-modernism may be seen as a strategy—like the late-19th-century craze for medievalism, epitomised by William Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites—by which we seek not to postpone the future but to indulge the past in one last, nostalgically lingering wallow before finally relinquishing it; rather as television channels broadcast, in the dying days of December, brisk, snippety overviews of the year's events.

With the higher forms of post-modern art, the present state of affairs evolved out of an impasse in the history of the modern avant-garde. In *Reflections on "The Name of the Rose"*, the little volume that he wrote to explain the genesis of his best-selling novel, the structuralist critic Umberto Eco described the situation thus: "The avant-garde destroys, defaces the past: *Les Femmes d'Alger* is a typical avant-garde act. Then the avant-garde goes further, destroys the figure, cancels it, arrives at the abstract, the informal, the white canvas, the slashed canvas, the charred canvas. In architecture and the visual arts, it will be the curtain wall, the building as stele, pure parallelepiped, minimal art; in literature, the destruction of the flow of discourse, the Burroughs-like collage, silence, the white page; in music, the passage from atonality to noise to absolute silence."

What happens next is that it becomes avant-garde to revisit, and wittily comment on, the past. This is the post-modern moment: in painting, for instance, David Hockney; in literature Borges and Nabokov, Marquez and Calvino; in cinema Beineix, but also the whole of contemporary Hollywood which, having for seven decades guzzled stories the way oil used to be guzzled by sleek, shark's-fin-winged Pontiacs and Cadillacs, suddenly realised that a crisis had arisen and that the stories it had left would have to be conserved and, eventually, re-used. Hence

It is in the nature of the post-modern object to shine. . . any texture not polished would have the incongruous rawness of a woman's unstockinged legs glimpsed beside others sheathed in nylon

the recent wave of duplications and prolongations, sequels and prequels, remakes and pre-makes, by which the movie medium, like a confused and constipated boa constrictor, has started to swallow itself from the tail upwards.

In architecture (where the term "post-modern" gained earliest currency) it meant first humanising the glass-and-steel crates of the International Style with sweet little passéist whimsies—what came to be known as "ironic historical references": a lick of gold leaf here, a neo-Palladian cornice there, a pediment here, an Ionic column there—until the world was deemed ready for full-scale reversion to a marbly, pseudo-Classical past when a building looked the way a building should. For the consequences of that trend, just glance around. Or else study the current development scheme for Canary Wharf and note the ultimate post-modern affectation—that even the style of the image's graphics has to imitate some 18th-century etching of a Canaletto-esque riverscape.

But high and low art, though often overlapping, do not run on parallel lines. Simplifying grossly, where high art seeks to be ahead of its time popular art is quite content to be *of* it. And to understand what is happening to those lighter-weight crafts which directly affect the textures of our lives, to understand why Vespas are back and boxy, double-breasted suits are in again (with a knowing post-modern wink pinned to the lapel), why an adman's hunch produced the ploughman's lunch and why there seems nothing more ersatz than real ale, it might be necessary to speculate on the nature of time itself, on how it is regulated and perceived by those who live it.

Centuries have perhaps been allotted the same age-span as mankind—namely three score years and ten—after which they live on borrowed time. We have become very conscious of centuries, even more of decades, and whatever we may think today of its fidgety dazzle and winsomely larky hubbub, most of us would concur that the last really creative decade of the 20th century was the 60s. Individual artists of distinction have emerged out of the succeeding decades, but their work has met with a state, corporate and public resistance which somehow seemed not to exist 20 years ago. In short, they are forced to work against the tide.

During the 70s the generation that had manned the barricades or burnt their bras and draft cards or purchased the empress's new frocks off the peg from Biba and Mary Quant were aging and keen to "get on with their lives". Ideologies tumbled like dominoes and with them hopes of changing the world. The upcoming generation did not give a fig for Twiggy or Daniel Cohn-Bendit. So the 70s were . . . what, precisely? We tend to have an indelible image of the 60s and equally of the 80s, but where did the 70s go? What on earth were they all about?



Pot-pourri of styles in modern fashion spread



Vidal Sassoon's bob has an enduring popularity



The art of Flonna Carlisle (born in 1954), owes a big debt to Max Beckman



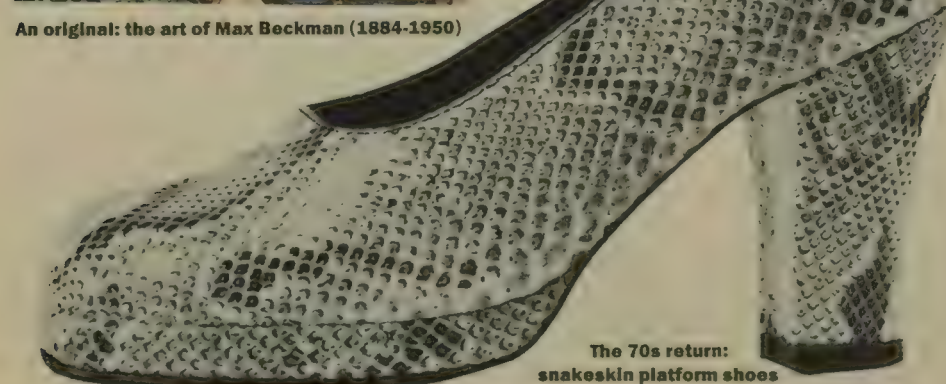
The retro-look watch



An original: the art of Max Beckman (1884-1950)



The Savoy



The 70s return: snakeskin platform shoes

Nostalgia. Like a drowning man reliving his life's experience before he submerges for the third and definitive time, the decade was spent idly leafing through the six that had preceded it, according them more or less a year apiece. First, the turn-of-the-century enjoyed a revival (Victorian memorabilia, Visconti's *Death in Venice* with its demure yet come-hither bathing costumes); then the teens ("that last glorious summer before the First World War"); then the 20s (Scott Joplin's rags, Robert Redford upstaged by his own shirts in *The Great Gatsby*); the 30s (gangsterish pin-striped suits, the Bloomsbury set); the 40s (bakelite radios, Glenn Miller and the big-band sound); the 50s (Hawaiian shirts, all that hideous molecular furniture); and even, ephemerally, the 60s again (the mini-skirt's comeback, the movie of *Hair*). It was a high-speed action-replay of the 20th century.

Naturally, while the 70s themselves were unfolding, observers alert to this trend must have started to wonder where it would all end. Was the serpent, yet again, about to consume its own tail? Were we going to parody the decade even as we were living through it? And yet how could we, since there was nothing to parody?

The answer is that the 80s, when they arrived, simply dehistoricised the past, which became a free-for-all, a monstrous pot-pourri of styles, fashions, tastes, conventions and folk myths. Since the great art of the decade is that of the deal, the speculation, the stock manipulation ("Wow!", as some enthusiastic reader burbled over Donald Trump's *The Art of the Deal*, "it sure puts music and painting in their place!"), the past has become merely another commodity to be bartered on the market.

And the future? Though reassured by the past, mankind is inherently terrified of the future, especially with a new millennium looming. That occult, unimaginable date, 2000, is only 12 years off. But we have as yet no conception of what it will bring. We can easily visualise ourselves living in the year 1998 but not in 2002. We do not even know how we shall be expected to pronounce it: "two thousand and two" or "twenty-two", as we say "nineteen-two"? What may await us beyond the millennial horizon has too long been tainted by science-fiction connotations. So what is the point of creating for the future when we remain ignorant of its fundamental requirements, ignorant of the myths, values and traditions it will no doubt generate for itself? With our view apocalyptically obscured by AIDS, the China Syndrome and the greenhouse effect, many of us are not persuaded that we shall survive to experience it.

Far better, during this interregnum before the future properly comes into its own, during the concluding years of this ebbing "lame-duck" century, that we continue telling the time—or rather, putting back the clock—on our new Seiko 1950s retro-look wristwatches ■



"My thesis on Origami..." he enthused. But he folded when we unwrapped the Graham's Port.



The Oriental's favourite pastime all but flattened dinner.

It had been a superlative evening; topics of conversation unfolding in pace with the courses.

The Boeuf en Croute had proved a revelation, while the Kiwi Fruit Glace was particularly enlightening.

As belts were discreetly loosened, thoughts drifted to more fulfilling matters:

The first glass of Graham's. That rich glowing colour. The fruity bouquet. That depth of flavour.

A train of thought that was shared by everyone. Well, almost everyone.

"Origami's a pet subject of mine"! Brows creased. Napkins were crushed.

One whiff of the Graham's and his pet subject was confetti. Civilised conversation re-asserted itself.

Thank the Lord for the Douro Valley Vineyards. God bless those little Portuguese Grapes.

And the Devil take Origami.

GRAHAM'S PORT. THE LAST WORD.

GRAHAM'S
Late Bottled Vintage
1981
PORT

OPORTO

IMPORTED BY

GRAHAM'S

ESTD IN 1850 AND IMPORTED BY

Wm. & A. Graham & Co.

e70d

Marcel Berlins meets

Emma Thompson

Within five minutes of our meeting she is reciting passages from Racine's tragedy *Andromaque*, exuberantly, with French gesticulations flying up the street from our little cafe table in West Hampstead. Her accent, endearingly, is not the rushed, clipped shorthand of Paris, but the leisurely, warm enunciated tone of the Midi, not unlike my own. She had absorbed the play in her teens, seeing it 16 times in Avignon. No one bothers to look at this casually dressed young Englishwoman giving her French mini-recital. It may have been one of her last moments of anonymity.

Emma Thompson thinks she is, in her words, "eminently ignorable". Few heads turn when she enters a restaurant; no one stops her to fawn, or to ask for an autograph. For all the millions who have seen and admired her on television, she has managed to remain largely unrecognised.

"Anonymity is very important to me," she says, not in the style of a young actress who means exactly the opposite, but nervously, genuinely afraid that her days of privacy are numbered. Her six-part BBC1 television series, *Thompson*, starting in early November, will bring her face to millions more than have ever seen her before. She takes some comfort from a story that no one used to recognise Marilyn Monroe when she was not on glamour duty.

The publicity build-up is fulsome. As the series approaches, newspapers and magazines are vying to tell their readers 100 things they never knew about Emma. But the media glorification of Emma Thompson is not entirely explained by her achievements. That she is gifted and versatile is beyond question. Her pert, red-haired Glaswegian band groupie in BBC television's *Tutti Frutti* was an entertaining and original comic creation; her role as Harriet Pringle in *Fortunes of War* showed that she could be serious, sensitive and wistful. She rightly picked up the BAFTA award for the best television actress of 1987, but neither of the programmes attracted the kind of viewing figures that create instant national fame.

She has also been a stand-up comic, and a singer and dancer (the female lead in *Me and My Girl*, doing the Lambeth Walk more than 500 times). But she has yet to be tested as a serious actress, and is only now making her first film—*Camden Town Boy*, directed by Mel Smith, which she describes as a "very funny, very simple love story" about a nurse and a comedian's straight man (played by Jeff "The Fly" Goldblum). More than any actress of her generation, she defies labelling. As a comedienne she has a harder edge than, say, Victoria Wood or Maureen Lipman;



PARTRICK GORMAN

“Thompson’s media glorification is not entirely explained by her achievements.

She still thinks she is eminently ignorable”

she has been known for her bawdy routines (some have described them with stronger adjectives), though there is unlikely to be much of that on the telly. She is part of no movement, and attempts to fit her into genres with comics like French and Saunders, or Ben Elton, or Wood or Tracey Ullman all flounder. Her series includes the whole range—monologues, mimicry, sketches, outrageous costumes, songs and dance. It's an eclectic mixture with no theme other than Miss Thompson's imagination and humour.

Next year she takes on Shakespeare and Ibsen. "Someone once said to me: 'No one will take you seriously until you do the classics.' I was shattered by that remark. It went very deep. It's pure snobbery. I hate it. I've never heard anything so stupid and ridiculous." She rails for a while against patronising English attitudes to comedy. The French, we agree, understand it better and take it more seriously. "It's easy to plug into tragedy, into the serious side of life. It's very difficult to plug into the joys." She stops and smiles. "Still, it's something to kick against, so one should not quibble."

Her father was Eric Thompson, the theatre director and creator of *Magic Roundabout*. He died young, a few years ago, leaving Emma with advice she has enthusiastically adopted: to be original and to take risks. Her mother, Phyllida Law, and sister Sophie are both actresses, with parts in the new series. Emma lives, as she has done most of her life, in West Hampstead, a still unfashionable though no longer unpricey area. She knows its every street and every shop. She points to the local library: "When I was little, I used to stand by that wall and look up and it seemed to be the biggest building in the world." Her small flat in a large Victorian house around the corner is not far from her mother's. They are emotionally close, too, and go on holidays together, often to Scotland, near Holy Loch, where as a child she used to chant "Polaris . . . Polaris" with the other children, not knowing what it meant.

"When I was younger, I felt guilty because I was so privileged and lucky," she recalls. She uses the word privilege a lot, not to mean financial comfort but rather the familial support and the educational and artistic opportunities she has had. But with this gratitude comes a strong sense of duty and responsibility. She may have stopped feeling guilty, but there is a strong streak of puritan morality which obliges her to seek to make positive use of her good fortune and popularity. Without uttering a single feminist cliché, she outlines her passion for raising the status of women in the arts.

She has had her own difficulties of identification. "I need to claw into the past, but acting tradition is almost all male. When I was young, I never had any female heroes. They were all men. Of course, I admire and respect actresses like Vanessa Redgrave and Dorothy Tutin, but they're only a generation above mine. They aren't part of a tradition, whereas the male

tradition goes back centuries." Her insistence on being part of a continuum is not limited to her career. "I feel a tremendous sense of gratitude and also responsibility to the women who fought and got me the vote, who fought for my education, who fought for my right to contraception. What I see missing in my generation is a sense of the past and a sense of continuity and of being the result of those struggles, and therefore a lack of acquaintanceship with those struggles. I don't think that's a good thing. I think you should always be aware where your rights came from and how ephemeral they are and how difficult to protect."

The success she has had imposes a duty on her to pass on the torch, she feels, to be an example and inspiration for other women. "I think doing what I do helps women who don't have as much confidence and haven't got as many privileges, to think better of themselves." She shows mild annoyance when I question how a well-educated, articulate middle-class woman who has hardly had to struggle through life can be a role model for the shackled, submerged women she is trying to help. "You can't make oppression a pre-requisite for holding a certain belief," she answers with asperity.

Every idea and every word of her television series is her own, and that is important to her, not just for the personal satisfaction but for the example she is showing to women. Emma found the writing a torment. She shut herself in a bare office and worked long, disciplined hours for months, denying herself the easy short-cuts and facile devices of most comedy script-writers. It ended up as a journey into her inner self, one which she found occasionally painful but is now enormously pleased about. "I really had no idea what I was going to write. But I knew that doing it I would really find out what I thought."

"I think of the series as an allotment. I've got this little patch of ground. And I've planted all these little seeds, and I've come up with a few carrots and a couple of mangy old onions and some potatoes and lots of different vegetables. They've got roots and they've come out of the ground and they were planted by me. Above the allotment is a massive, an incredibly beautiful oak tree, and that's Shakespeare. When you get very tired, you take a deck chair and you go and sit under the oak tree." And what's below the allotment, in that scrubby bit leading down to the railway line? She laughs and thinks. "Mrs Thatcher's Britain, perhaps."

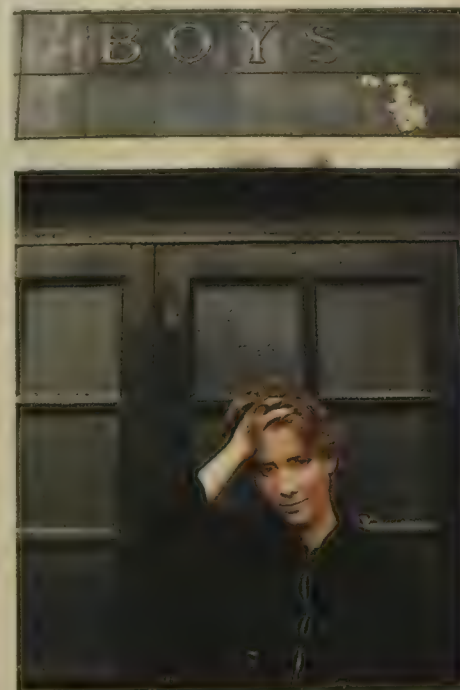
It is less than 10 years since Emma Thompson first showed a Cambridge Footlights audience her extraordinary talent. The nation may now think of her as a fully-fledged star; but she regards herself as still a learner. "Your years from 20 to 30 are your apprenticeship. You're having a go. You cannot believe anything you've done to be complete, or even that good." But what is the apprenticeship aimed at? "I sometimes get worried and say to myself: 'Come on, you must settle down to one thing.' But when I'm doing comedy, I think I should be

doing something serious, and the other way around. If you ask me to look five years ahead, I would like to have done an awful lot of theatre, especially classical theatre. At the same time I'd like to have written a lot, I'm not quite sure what. My problem is that I want to do everything."

"But I don't have any desire to be an internationally known film star living in Hollywood. I am not tempted by glitter, and I have no ambition to conquer America," she says. "I once heard David Puttnam telling someone not to be a little Englander. Perhaps I am, because I love this country and I want to do theatre here. Because that feels enough, does that make me parochial? I think not."

Also on the agenda for the next decade is having children. "I'm not broody or anything. I just don't want to get too old. I want to be able to take them on adventure-packed holidays to Canada. I think I could give them a good time." There is a man in her life, who may or may not be (depending on which paper or magazine you read) the *wunderkind* Shakespearian actor, director and impresario Kenneth Branagh. She does not welcome inquiries.

But she lives alone and, on the whole, likes it. "I've learned how to appreciate solitude. I operate well on my own. I've grown much better at it. I'm good at separating myself into different components. If I get depressed, I'll separate out my father bit and get it to talk to me kindly."



She has no desire to be an international film star

Would she prefer to be living with someone? "It doesn't worry me either way. I certainly don't need to be part of a couple. Over the years people have got so used to seeing me on my own, inviting me on my own, that in their eyes I became a couple. What I hate is people who have to be invited in couples. I don't like exclusivity. I find it rude. I find it inhumane." ■

brighton beach MEMOIRS

Tom Fort

Do bacteria think? What does a chair feel? Like Monty Python, the 18th World Congress of Philosophy sought the meaning of life

There is, it might be argued, something inherently, if only faintly, dispiriting about the idea of a philosopher from Manitoba. Anyway, there he was two tables away in the Indian restaurant, bearded, eyes glittering with unquenchable enthusiasm for his subject, resolved to keep his penetrating, neighing voice in good trim through incessant use. "Causality, yes, determinism, no," he proclaimed (or perhaps it was the other way round).

Two fellow Canadian philosophers listened attentively. The fourth member of the party, an Englishman, looked despondently into his *biryani*. Perhaps he, like me, was uttering a silent prayer that Mr Chilka, the proprietor of the restaurant, would leap from his kitchen and hurl *vindaloo* sauce into the face of the Manitoba mouth, and thus end the monologue on logical atomism.

No such luck; the sage of the prairies moved on to apriorism, or some such stuff. And even if his noise had been stilled, there were

Talk of Kant
invites a schoolboy
snigger. "Descartes
before the
horse" gets a smile

1,000 others to take his place. For this was the week in which Brighton hosted the 18th World Congress of Philosophy. And I—who had never heard of Husserl, who thought Schleiermacher was the German goalkeeper, and who knew of Wittgenstein only that he loved Betty Grable's legs—had been sent to observe this communion of sophists.

It opened with an address to welcome the delegates, which was

delivered by the former Home Office minister, Lord Elton. He claimed my sympathy by announcing that he was not a philosopher, and immediately forfeited it by making a philosophical joke about some German. This seemed pretty feeble to me, perhaps because I could not follow it. But some of the philosophers tittered courteously.

My first real task was to wrestle with the reflections of Elizabeth Anscombe, emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the University of Cambridge, on the subject of "Men and Essences". I lost. It was a first-round knockout. I had thought I was well-prepared, having equipped myself with the Fontana *Dictionary of Modern Thought* (edited by Bullock, Stallybrass, Trombley). I was soon turning the pages in a fevered thirst for knowledge. But I couldn't go fast enough. While I was still learning about essences, Professor Anscombe was on to "the signification of a predicate". As I grappled with logos, she was asking: "Was ist eine Funktion?" As the concepts flew thick and fast, I accepted that I could not cope with this species of philosophical pebble-dashing, and threw in the towel.

However, a number of intriguing questions did emerge from the forbidding terrain of Professor Anscombe's thesis. Do bacteria think? What does a chair feel? How many legs has a tree? I pondered these matters as I rolled up my trousers, took my net, and went in search of prawns in the rock pools at the sea's edge.

Twenty-five years ago, my brothers and I used to collect vast quantities of these prawns below Roedean School. My mother was headmistress of this red-roofed; leprous-brown institution which rides the cliffs a mile or two along the coast from Brighton. There was a tunnel which took us from the school grounds down to the best pools. It was to these that I retraced

my steps. I wished to ruminate on the nature of Man as illuminated (or not) by his relationship with crustacea; to inquire into the essence of the hunting instinct; and to see if the prawns were still there. To my surprise, they were. As I dropped them into my bucket, I speculated on whether prawns could dream, whether they were capable of jealousy, whether they felt resentment (at being boiled

Most who studied
philosophy at
university recall
little but
the futility of it

alive, for instance). Looking at them, I found it difficult to come to firm conclusions, so I sought help from a group of the philosophers who had gathered for a discussion of "Ethical Issues in the Treatment of Animals".

A meat-eating American thinker expounded the view that "unless we establish that animals are sentient beyond pain and pleasure, we are allowed to take certain action with them". Would "certain action" cover dropping them alive into boiling water, I wondered. Then a vegetarian philosopher—American again—embarked on a complex argument about the need to liberate animals from exploitation. I regret to say that I went to sleep during this disquisition, and was rightly rebuked by the man sitting next to me.

He could not see my press badge, and must have taken me for one of his kind. This was my fear throughout; that a discreet stretch at the back of the hall would be misinterpreted as a desire to contribute. I

dreamed uncomfortably of being called upon to make an impromptu intervention in a colloquium entitled: "Is Kant's opusculum on perpetual peace relevant to the problems of our age?"

So I kept my head and arms down, and tried hard to avoid snoring, and to learn something. I listened to Russians and Poles disagreeing about the essential benevolence of Marxism; to Americans, Dutch and Swiss agreeing on the need for international business ethics; to an Anabaptist talking about a loving response to the violence of the Crucifixion; to an immensely ancient Japanese putting the question "Is Shintoism a religion?" and being prevented by a blockage in his throat from even beginning an answer; to an amazingly learned Italian expatiating on the phenomenological evidence vindicating the specificity of man.

The most impenetrable of the philosophical football matches that I stumbled upon was organised by the World Institute for Phenomenological Research. I listened to a plump young woman called Jadwiga delivering a paper about Longinus and his thesis "On the Sublime". My senses reeled at Longinus's "scientific holism" and "primeval insights through sedimentation of meaning". Jadwiga quoted approvingly the sentiment "the truly eloquent must be free of low and ignoble thoughts" and I realised that counted me out.

Before the discussion could progress to "the Tagorean Interpretation of Amī" or "Milton, Kierkegaard and Ontological Individualism", I fled. Next door another band of brainboxes was chewing over metaphysics. A reference to "inter-contradictory paradigms" reached me and I bolted for the seafront, and a healing cloud of candy-floss.

The trouble with holding a World Congress of Philosophy in



"A great cloud of intellectual vapour was discharged, before dispersing on the sea breezes"

translation headpieces, and the omnipresent sexist language.

This philistinism is, of course, shared by the Government, which gave a footling £2,000 towards the cost of staging the Congress, and has closed several of the country's university philosophy departments. It is not surprising that the British philosophers at Brighton looked poor, or harassed, or both. The reason why many of them come—down-trodden and hard-up as they are—is their hope that they may be noticed by sleek, evidently prosperous American philosophers, and offered jobs. Or Canadian. From any country, in fact, where they speak English, cherish philosophy and pay its practitioners a decent salary.

But the sleek Americans are not satisfied, either. Their great desire is to be more "relevant", for the results of their pure and high-grade mental exertions to be listened to by someone other than their students. The Russian delegation at Brighton was headed by a close associate of Gorbachev's. It is not easy to imagine Reagan, Bush or Dukakis seeking chums in such circles.

I fear that this relevance will not be easily acquired. We had, in Brighton, 1,000 of the brainiest people on earth, ready to give of their best. A great cloud of intellectual vapour was discharged and noted, before dispersing on the sea breezes. The response of the host nation was, I regret to say, either utter indifference, or, at best, ignorant, prejudiced amusement.

They reminded me, these philosophers, of starlings or rooks sitting in a long line on a telephone wire, arranging their feathers and chirruping away into the upper air. Better, perhaps, to be unheard, with your head in the clouds, than to suffer the fate of Heraclitus. He, it will be remembered, was the one who informed us that "you cannot step into the same river twice", and breathed his last on a dunghheap ■

England is that, while Cicero may have thought it the mother of all the arts, here it is regarded as a joke (I am aware that I exemplify this wretched and discreditable prejudice). The last Congress was held in Montreal, where they take the subject very seriously. One Canadian professor said to me: "Canada is a nation in search of an identity, and we feel we can help." The next Congress will be held in Moscow, where they also prize their thinkers.

But the prevailing tendency here is to sneer. To talk of Kant is to invite a schoolboy snigger. "Descartes before de horse" will get a smile. The Monty Python song captures the tradition: "Immanuel Kant was a real piss tank/Heidegger, Heidegger was a beery begger/

They reminded me of starlings on a telephone wire, arranging their feathers

Aristotle, Aristotle, was a bugger for the bottle . . ." and so on, with the chorus "I drink, therefore I am."

Most of those who studied philosophy at university in distant days seem to recall little but the futility of it. They recall with hilarity the feeling of inner nothingness prompted

by their tutor's weary question: "Perhaps you would like to elaborate on your interesting reference to Husserl's separation of phenomenology from empiricism?"

Thus Channel 4's idea of covering the proceedings in Brighton was to put a reporter on the beach with a chair, get him to ask how he could know the chair was there when he was looking the other way, and then—by a trick of the camera—make it vanish. *The Times* made a joke about an African delegate postulating the theory that as he had no money on him, it followed that he could not pay the £150 registration fee. Even the thoughtful young chap from *The Guardian* referred frivolously to failing microphones, disappearing

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property

Carrie Segrave

Between Dulwich and Greenwich—one of London's most neglected corners—enclaves of charm and character await the assiduous house-hunter

It is a paradox of the property market that, while south-east England booms, the south-eastern quadrant of London is the city's most neglected corner. It is unjust, for here there still exists a cache of substantial family homes, little terraced cottages, roomy flats and the odd vision of Georgian splendour. There is some urban decay, but there are also hills and woods, parks, sweeping views and history. There are three-bedroom houses priced in the £80,000 to £100,000 range, and four-bedroom town houses, with garage, for less than £120,000.

So why, when everywhere from Earl's Court to Hackney has been "discovered", has this large tract been overlooked? Perhaps because car travellers forcing their way through to the Dover road get jammed in Peckham High Street and New Cross. Cut off by the river (there are no bridges east of Tower Bridge), with congested roads constricted by railway lines, it is not surprising that the district seems impossibly remote. Only a branch of the Metropolitan struggles down to New Cross, otherwise the area is bereft of tubes.

But look at a map of inner London: Camberwell is no farther from City offices than Mayfair. And those who despaired of finding anything affordable within an hour of their work are discovering that the trains take 10 minutes from Lewisham to Charing Cross. Now London Regional Transport is considering light rail networks around Peckham and Lewisham. The Docklands Light Railway will, if cash can be found, cross the river to Greenwich and beyond. Water buses are in service, with more boarding-points to come. There is even talk of extending the tube eastwards from Elephant and Castle.

However, the most tangible sign of the revival of south-east London will be ELRIC, the East London River Crossing, a giant bridge across the Thames linking the A2, south of Greenwich, with the North Circular Road and the M11 motorway. This should open in 1994 and will provide the direct link to north London that south-east dwellers have so long lacked.

The catalyst for the transport changes is the Docklands development, which has realigned London's axis towards the east. Mental maps will have to be redrawn, with Tower Bridge somewhere nearer the centre of the picture instead of well over on the right. So much is heard of "Docklands" in isolation that one can easily forget to relate it to its neighbours—and that means the overlooked stretches of the south-east between leafy Dulwich and historic Greenwich.

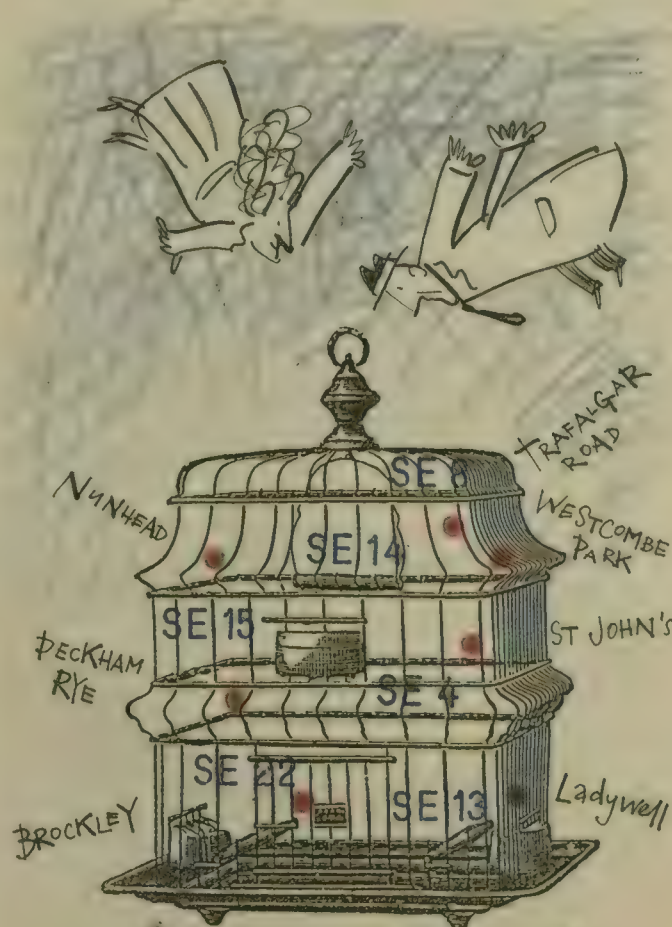
The current focus of attention is

Peckham. It is now the location of a television sitcom. But people in the know are more impressed by estate agents Roy Brooks's decision to open an office in Peckham Rye. Until recently the firm which pioneered this area, as it has so many others, has worked from one office at the more Bohemian end of King's Road. That their second office should be in Peckham is seen as deeply significant. Throughout the south-east districts other central London agencies such as Hamptons (Hamptons Levens here) and

Winkworth are appearing among the local ones, and the Woolwich is creating its own chain of estate agents in the area.

To the north of the High Street Peckham's streets, damaged in the last war, were replaced by large and uninspired tracts of council housing. Its grimmest part, the North Peckham Estate, is now targeted for a multi-million pound redevelopment scheme. Head south towards Peckham Rye, though, and the contrast is surprising. Here is a mature Victorian suburb where a small, three-bedroom terraced house in Nuthbrook Street is for sale at £87,000; a larger, five/six-bedroom house in tree-lined Choumert Road, with "bags of potential", is £120,000. At its southern end, Rye Lane suddenly widens and there, for all the world like some small market town, is a little green surrounded by a cluster of antique shops. The triangular northern tip of Peckham Rye Common holds a swimming-pool, while across East Dulwich Road, Peckham Rye Common and Park open out in a generous sweep uphill to the south. Mile for mile, Peckham and Dulwich have more green spaces than many other desirable corners of town. Overlooking the Rye there still remain some Grade II-listed Georgiana: Winkworth list a four-bedroom example, with 100-foot garden, at £275,000.

Behind the eastern arm of Peckham Rye, more greenery lies at the end of many of Nunhead's roads. Nunhead's large, wooded Victorian cemetery is the south's answer to Highgate—complete with



MARIE HÉLÈNE JEEVES

6 Those despairing of finding anything affordable within an hour of their work will discover that the trains take 10 minutes from Lewisham to Charing Cross

guided tours. Reservoirs and allotments complete the silvan scene. The little roads of this quiet corner are a mixture of most periods, from Victorian to the present. Much is council-built but showing the hallmarks of increasing owner-occupation. A corner to watch.

Across the railway tracks lies Brockley, where the best patch is the conservation area in the angle of Lewisham Way and Brockley/Upper Brockley Roads, across to Tyrwhitt Road. Here is Victoriana of the grander sort: large, yellow stock-brick mansions, whose big rooms make for better than average flat conversions. Those at the top may find views clear to St Paul's, those below can overlook gardens that are often 150 feet long.

6 *Despite wartime bombing and soulless 60s council building, Deptford is still very much a community, not just a collection of streets on the way to somewhere else*

East of the accurately-named Hilly Fields park, estate agents are already trying to elevate Ladywell into a "village". Nearby, central Lewisham provides the area's main shopping: the busy High Street is crammed with large stores and crowds.

North from Brockley lies a corner which is particularly favoured—not least by two property journalists who have moved in there. Telegraph Hill is the highest of the south-east's little hills, the most pleasant parts of this side of London. The top of the hill itself is a small park: here, an early telegraph station relayed to the capital news of Wellington's victory at Waterloo. The trees spill out down wide, orderly boulevards flanked by large—some huge—Victorian mansions, now family homes and flats. Down the hill lies

New Cross Gate which, with nearby New Cross, boasts the only tube line for miles, connecting with Wapping and the Docklands Light Railway. And Greenwich is a short drive away. New Cross itself, once a pretty village, is now just a one-way road system and the tube/train stations. Its once-handsome early Victorian terraces look shabby and permanently affronted by the roaring traffic at their feet, though the size of their rooms makes for spacious flats.

To the north lies Deptford, struggling bravely to overcome the depression brought by the closing of first its naval dockyards and later the nearby Surrey Docks. Its spirit remains strong. Despite wartime bombing and soulless 60s council building, Deptford is still very much a community, not just a collection of streets on the way to somewhere else.

The new district created on the Surrey Docks site will help: homes in a greenfields setting (many of the docks were filled in and reclaimed) and a major new shopping centre. Surrey Docks homes, it is worth noting, tend to be rather cheaper than those of the Isle of Dogs across the river. A new riverbus pier offers a service to the City and Charing Cross.

On the borders of Deptford and Lewisham, St John's is an unexpectedly peaceful little corner with its own station though, alas, not many trains stop there. Pretty, two-storey cottages are flower-bedecked, and can still occasionally be found in original condition by the assiduous first-time buyer. The happily-named Friendly Street leads into this little enclave.

Cross Deptford Creek, and you are approaching those jewels of the south-east, Greenwich and Blackheath. The prices of homes in and around the charming Georgian village rise as high as the kites on the Heath. The bargain-hunter should turn instead towards Greenwich. View the stately, chandelier-hung houses of Croom's Hill as just part of the backcloth to the Naval College and the Queen's House: one might just as well contemplate buying the *Cutty Sark*.

But, on the far eastern side of Greenwich Park, the Victorian ter-

aces which slope peacefully around Westcombe Park Station are a better hunting-ground. So, too, are the rows of workers' cottages grouped around Trafalgar Road. The terraces north of the road are crammed behind some remaining industrial sites along the river; but they are surprisingly peaceful, nonetheless, and have Greenwich attractions on the doorstep—not to mention the Georgian corner by the ancient Cutty Sark pub.

Past Greenwich, the Blackwall Tunnel motorway acts as the great divide. Charlton, Woolwich, Plumstead and the ex-GLC new town of Thamesmead must wait for 1994 and the coming of ELRIC to get good road links—though developers are already at work. And watch, too, the Greenwich Peninsula: an industrial wasteland around the Blackwall Tunnel. This is one of five sites earmarked for possible

In Peckham, six-bedroom houses are selling for £120,000



large-scale housing. Competition for the peninsula site—old gas-works land—is fierce, and the eventual development will herald a considerable upturn in London's overlooked corner ■

Carrie Segrave is editor of the annual *London Property Guide* (Mitchell Beazley).

Pound for pound, south-east London offers more per square foot than comparable south-western areas. Areas are patchy, so look hard at maps before setting out. But there are some surprising enclaves—the character of a district can change completely as one turns a corner. Here are examples of recent asking prices:

Camberwell: In Vicarage Grove, a four/five-bedroom, four-storey Victorian house, complete with self-contained flat, 90-foot garden and garage, has been "sympathetically renovated", say agents Winkworth. Cost £157,500. Grade II-listed Georgiana (c 1793) can be found across the main Camberwell Road in leafy Grove Lane. A house with similar details, but on a grander scale (equipped with a fountain), is advertised by Roy Brooks at £325,000.

Peckham. Those small, Victorian three-bedroom terraces, so plentiful throughout London, can be had here for under £90,000. Winkworth list at £275,000 a four-bedroom Georgian house overlooking the Rye.

Telegraph Hill. One-bedroom, semi-basement flat, sharing a 60-foot garden, in Jerminham Road: £58,000. An enormous, double-fronted house in Erlanger Road, overlooking the park, with five bedrooms and four reception rooms: £230,000. Both through Roy Brooks.

Lewisham. Hamptons Levens have an Edwardian mansion "with potential", though in need of modernisation, at £250,000. The smallest of its six bedrooms measures 14 feet by 12 feet; there are also four reception rooms, a conservatory, and a 140-foot by 90-foot garden, overlooking Lewisham Park. They also list a four-bedroom, three-reception-room house in Shell Road, close to Hilly Fields and Ladywell "village", at £105,000.

Greenwich. In Chevening Road, at the cheaper, eastern end, a three-bedroom Victorian home with 30-foot reception room, which backs on to the open fields of East Greenwich Pleasance: £140,000. Finally, a rule of thumb for flats in south-east London: an SE15 studio in a two-year-old development was among the cheapest I found, at £48,000. But there are many flats from £50,000 and, for £70,000 upwards, it is possible to find Georgian conversions with own gardens.

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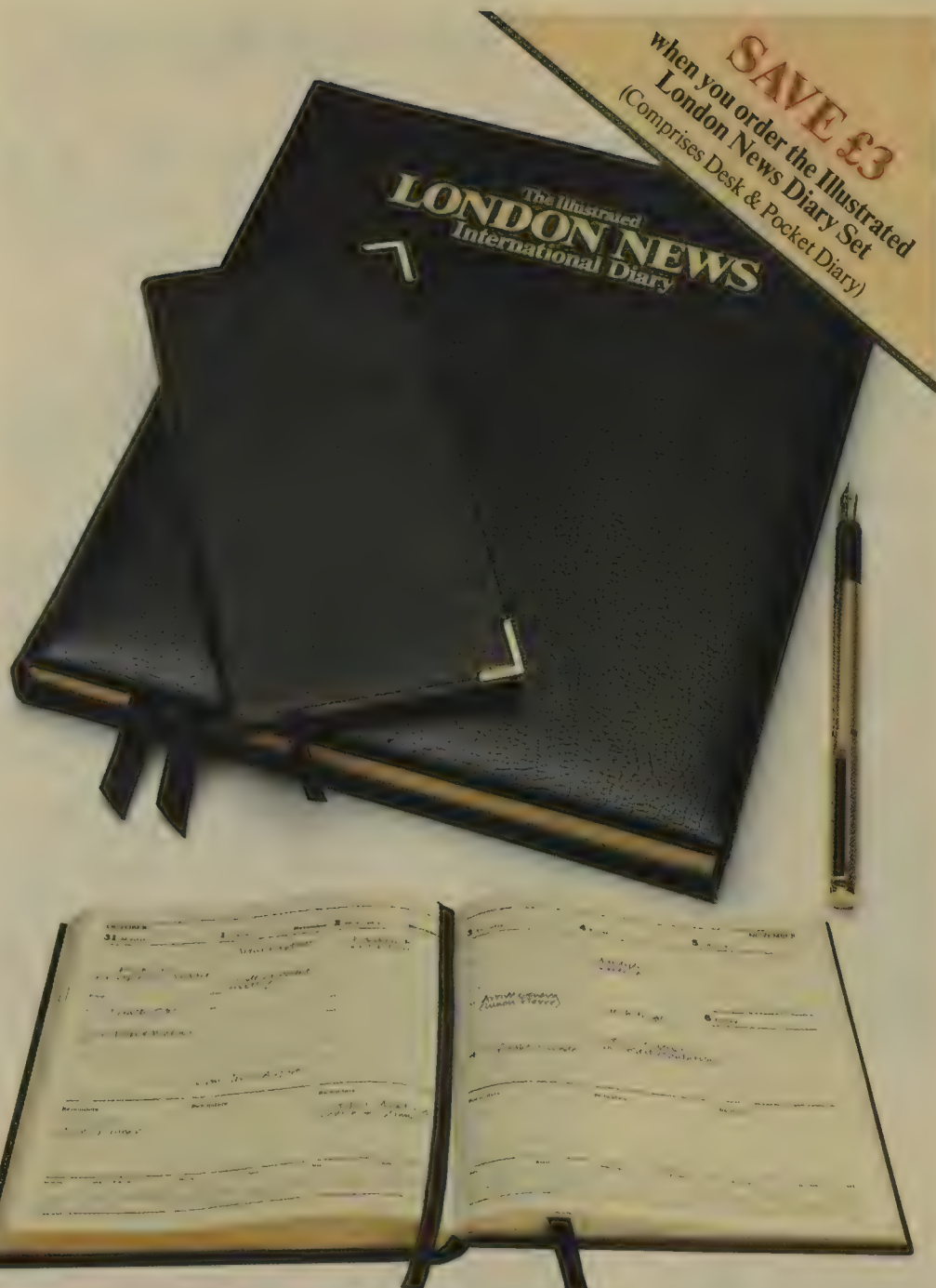
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ILN11

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The modern Grand Tour is an eastern Mediterranean cruise, visiting the ancient sites of Knossos, Pergamum and Troy, where Hector fought Achilles. "Physically taxing, mentally stimulating and, yes, fun."

Lee Langley

JEAN PHILIPPE DELHOMME



"Does anyone here remember Gallipoli?" one of the guest lecturers wondered aloud as we sailed through the Dardanelles. "Of course!" muttered the retired doctor at my shoulder, "it was only 73 years ago!" Next day he was up front on the treacherous, back-breaking climb to the acropolis at Pergamum while I stumbled along gamely at the rear. Buffeted by the wind as the sun beat down, I saw a notice near a crumbling wall: "Warning. Danger of collapse." Not only of the ruins, I thought to myself. People who go on Swan Hellenic cruises are doing a

6 People who go on
Swan Hellenic cruises
are doing a modern
Grand Tour: in love
with the past, they
seek the ruins rather
than sun and surf 9

modern Grand Tour: in love with the past, they seek the ruins rather than the sun and surf—though some of that can be enjoyed in passing.

There were 260 of us travelling the Homeric routes to the ancient cities: Troy, where Hector fought Achilles; Mycenae, where Agamemnon was murdered in his bath by Clytemnestra. We spent two weeks aboard MTS *Orpheus*, exploring the eastern Mediterranean, with five guest lecturers to spoon-feed us our cultural crash diet.

Our daily standing orders, given out at dinner each night, laid down a tight

itinerary of ruins, sites and museums. True, some indolent sun-lovers just lay about on deck and sipped cool drinks but they weren't your true Swans. The regulars tend to be middle-aged, even venerable, and nimble of foot and mind—these trips take stamina. There is generally a percentage of youngish teachers and harassed professionals, opting for alternative stress therapy, and a sprinkling of Americans and Australians. It is particularly good for people travelling unaccompanied. You need never sit next to the same person twice at dinner, nor will you languish

alone. The prevailing atmosphere is friendly and tactfully incurious in the English style. Hothouse romances are unlikely to develop; friendships may. The food is safe rather than spicy—more London club than taverna—well-presented and plentiful.

We started in Greece, at Thessaloniki, and by next morning were cruising round Mount Athos, with a deck lecture on its 20 monasteries. Lunch and a swim in the ship's pool, followed by another lecture. Quick change for the captain's welcome cocktail party and a brief lecture before dinner. Next morning we were up at 6.10am to watch the sunrise and the minarets of Istanbul appear. The Blue Mosque, Topkapi, St Sophia and the mosque of Süleymaniye the Magnificent... how to see Istanbul in five hours without actually running. Old hands could take an alternative trip or stroll off to have a Turkish coffee.

On the third day we anchored at Canakkale, on the Turkish coast, and by 8am were on our way to Troy. Print frocks, sensible shoes, cavalry twills and panama hats among the veterans; shorts, bare shoulders and flip-flops for the younger ones. Clambering over rocks we huddled like sheep in the shade of pine trees to keep out of the sun as

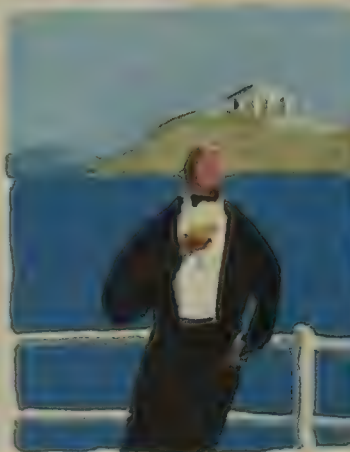


unflappable cruise director, "We have inspected the toilets on the site and they are quite inadequate. Therefore we will make a ten-minute comfort stop at the Schliemann House."

Days passed in a haze of ruins, coach rides, island villages glittering white and blue... The acropolis at Pergamum, where we gathered in the green shade of a spreading fig tree to hear a lecture before scaling the heights... Mycenae, with the beehive tombs and Lion Gate—the blood legacy of the House of Atreus... Santorini for the astonishing, recently-uncovered, volcanic site of Akrotiri... Skyros, the island home of Achilles, where some of us skipped the climb to the castle and bought local honey, flavoured with thyme.

The coaches were always on time, the dining-rooms and bars on *Orpheus* ready to receive us, the jug of iced water in each cabin replenished, as we tottered home to our air-conditioned floating hotel to be greeted, on some days, by the smell of lamb sizzling on charcoal for a buffet deck lunch.

Delos was a highlight for everyone, a tiny uninhabited island rising out of an ink-blue sea: ancient streets, sacrificial altars, fine houses with mosaic floors, traces of oil and wine shops, an avenue of lean stone lions, white in the sun. We wandered unhurried, the wind sweeping the temples by the shore. This site was full of mystery and power, whereas Troy, so long awaited, had been a



disappointment—too rushed, too crowded, swamped by the visitors who swarmed all over the place.

Mykonos was an afternoon frivolity. Tinos an unexpected delight: the Lourdes of Greece. Its little fishing port was thronged with people gathered for the Feast of the Assumption. As the golden sky deepened to violet, people bought votive offerings of cheap metal, and candles as tall as themselves, at stalls where shell decorations and plastic mobiles tinkled and clattered in the wind. We sailed at midnight, leaving the laughter and singing behind.

On Crete we saw the Minoan palaces: Knossos (noisy and crowded), Phaestros, Mallia. At Epidauros we were offered a bonus: a performance of Sophocles's *Philoctetes* in the ancient theatre, which dates from the fourth

century BC. Not many cruise ships carry a reference library on board. *Orpheus* does, and there was an unseemly rush for the five copies of the play in English. "I can put you down on the waiting-list", said the lecturer's wife who was acting as librarian, cheerfully. I stayed up late to do my homework...

Next day, as the dusk thickened, we drove to Epidauros and joined Greeks streaming along pine-shadowed paths. Suddenly we came out into the open—a heart-stopping moment: the vast bowl of the theatre rose above us, row upon row of giant stone steps ringing the circle of the stage. It seats 14,000 people and there must have been 8,000 there. Bats squeaked and swooped low over our heads. A cool wind ruffled the trees. At 9.20pm the lights went out. Blackness. Cicadas whirled noisily in the surrounding pines. Then a low, ominous throb of music started up and a line of black-clad men came silently from the encircling trees: the play had begun.

More islands suffused with the scent of pines and wild pepper trees: Monemvasia, Kythera and Pylos, from where King Nestor sent 90 black ships to the Trojan war. On a flat hilltop surrounded by old olive trees the foundations of Nestor's palace (rediscovered only in 1939) lie revealed. It is a dry, dusty place and the heat is blinding but we forget the discomfort listening to one of the great detective stories of archaeology: the decipherment of Linear B, the mysterious hieroglyphs found on clay tablets, which finally revealed that these ancient people spoke Greek, but wrote it in a different form.

Too soon, we were approaching Venice from the sea, and it was time to go home. For two weeks we had been shepherded faultlessly, never had to queue for tickets or entry, wait for transport or check opening hours. Sixteen ports of call in 14 days painlessly manoeuvred. It had been physically taxing, mentally stimulating and, yes, fun.

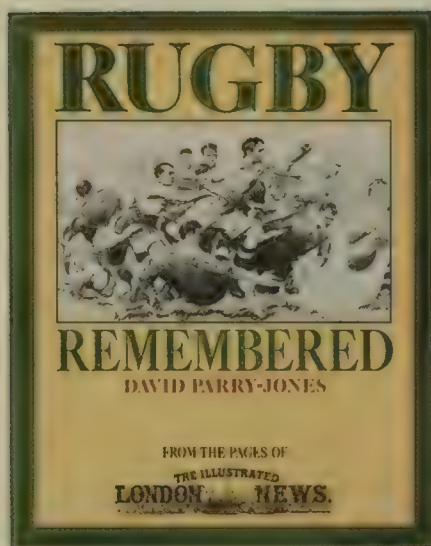
Travel notes

Swan Hellenic's programme of cruises runs from March to November, the majority concentrating on the eastern Mediterranean, especially southern Greece, the Greek islands and western Turkey. Selected cruises also take in the Black Sea, Israel, Egypt and the Red Sea. Prices start from £1,028 a person including air travel, all meals on board (there are gala nights which include free wine and music for dancing in the lounge every night), services of guides, travel insurance, all tips, most excursions and first-class rail travel to Gatwick. For further information contact Swan Hellenic Cruises, 77 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1PP (01-831 1515).

6 Days passed in a haze of ruins, coach rides, island villages glittering white and blue... The acropolis at Pergamum, where we gathered to hear a lecture...

Professor Peter Warren, perched on ancient rubble, conjured up the towers in all their glory. When he quoted Homer he translated the line, but it was the Greek original which got the appreciative ripple as he plucked a handful of withered grass: "Now corn is here, where once Troy was..." Sunlight on a broken column, Homer in a handful of dust. Did it all happen? Does it matter? There were more immediate problems to attend to: "Ladies and gentlemen," called Barry our utterly

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food

Matthew Fort

Sharp knives and chanterelles, with local duck and freshly-caught trout, make for an easy away win in front of an appreciative audience

"Binxie and Bobbo have asked us to their cottage. What shall I say, dearest heart?"

"Oh God. I suppose we have to go. Say yes."

"I thought so. I've already said we'd make the 15th. And don't forget to take your knives."

In this cooking lark I have to play away from time to time. I don't think it's got that much to do with awestruck respect for my culinary genius. It's more to do with the fact that she who normally shoulders the burden of churning out the fish fingers, beans and chips for three kids, before whipping together a nifty little *carré d'agneau en chemise* for two, is only too glad to off-load some of the burden once in a while. My technique is to acquiesce gracefully to one major effort, and then spend the rest of the weekend basking in the glory.

But while the general bowing and scraping is honeyed balm to my soul, conditions for performance are frequently rather less than ideal. Opportunities for ending up with egg not simply on the face, but all over, from head to foot, are legion.

Did I ever tell you of the time when, with the restless mob braying for their first course, I went to inspect my starter for 10? It was a prize-winning effort, a marrow from the garden stuffed with a delicate mixture of chicken, veal and herbs, which I intended to serve with a light and piquant fresh tomato sauce. Alas, on inspection I discovered that it had scarcely been warmed, let alone cooked, in spite of having been placed in the Aga hours before.

Then there was the unforgettable occasion when I found myself suddenly transported from one side of the kitchen to the other, festooned with a julienne of courgettes, and pebble-dashed with fried potato, staring at a jumble of cupboards and cooker, ripped from their moorings by a gas explosion.

These are the things that make or break reputations. They are not easily forgotten, particularly by other people, so these days I try to avoid the more obvious pitfalls by taking basic equipment with me. By basic I mean knives. A cook, even an amateur who fancies him-

self a bit, cannot function without sharp knives, so I pack a large one, a medium one, a fish filleter, a vegetable knife and an old-fashioned steel for sharpening them up.

To this Rambo kit, I sometimes add a small balloon whisk, a pastry-brush, a swivel peeler and a hair sieve. This may seem to indicate a lack of faith in other people's household equipment but, as I have found on numerous occasions, it is better to be safe than distraught.



My knives were the first things I unpacked on arrival at The Mill, a delicious, whitewashed house tucked away into a corner of Exmoor. Never mind that we got lost getting there. Never mind the rain clouds scudding overhead and more promised. There were mint and rosemary and marjoram in the garden. There was a little stream thronged with small trout running through the garden, and there were two empty days ahead of us.

Much of the first afternoon I spent practising the art of the upstream worm, and dibbling many small trout from the brook for my show dinner on Saturday. In fact hedgerow husbandry proved to be unusually productive, because we also discovered a mass of chanterelles hard by the main road.

I don't know whether to be delighted at or to despair of the average Briton's attitude to fungi.

"Eat them! How do you know they're not poisonous?" On the one hand it seems a terrible waste. On the other it means that there's more for me.

Sadly it was a little too early for blackberries and a little too late for wild raspberries, and our scavenging parties could find no trace of blueberries whatsoever. So we made our way into the local market town for ingredients for a pudding and to pick up a brace of ducks.

the fat and juices over it, put it in the fridge and toddled off to have a bath, sure in the knowledge that at least one course was under the belt.

It wasn't long before it was under everybody else's belt as well, and they were ready for the trout. When fish is as fresh as these, the best thing is to serve them as simply as possible. Out with the guts and gills, wash away the blood-vessels along the spine, slash the sides in two or three places, and fry in butter. Such trout is a revelation to those who know only the flabby, farm-bred variety. They were firm, and had a distinctive, sweet flavour.

Now clear the plates, children, and make way for the *suprêmes de canard au Setúbal et aux chanterelles*. Setúbal? Setúbal is a Portuguese dessert wine of a sweetish bent, made to ginger up a duck's breast. A glass or two, reduced in the pan in which the duck had been fried to pink perfection, made an admirable foil to the accompanying meat's richness and succulence.

Each plate was garnished with a great mound of chanterelles, brushed clean and stewed in butter. With some runner beans for health and colour contrast, this was a really splendid dish, made all the more so by bottle after bottle of Château Gruaud-Larose 1976.

The warmth of the kitchen grew. The rain thrashed down outside. Cheese came and went, a mature Caerphilly, just going soft beneath the rind, a rich, creamy Cashel Blue, and an 18-month-old Cheddar which tended to lift the roof off the mouth. Never mind. You could always soothe it with another mouthful of admirable claret.

And then came pudding. At this point I handed over responsibility to my hostess. A rash action, some might say, but not I. Should my wife ever run off with a dietician, I shall go round to my hostess's house and propose on the spot. She is the rarest of rare cooks, one who makes a crumble with the right ratio of crumble to fruit, apple in this case. Two inches of delicious crunchy crumble above a thin layer of puréed apple, topped with clotted cream.

I don't mind who knows it, but I went to bed a happy man. It had definitely been an away win ■

A sepia-toned photograph of a busy street scene in London. In the foreground, several horse-drawn carriages and pedestrians are visible on the street. A large, ornate bridge with intricate metalwork spans the middle ground. In the background, a tall, pointed tower, likely St. Paul's Cathedral, rises above the city skyline. The image has a historical, aged appearance.

A black and white photograph of a crowded street scene in a city, likely Jerusalem. The street is filled with people, some walking and others in horse-drawn carriages. In the background, there are buildings, including a prominent church with a tall spire on the left. The scene is busy and captures a moment of daily life in a historical setting.

A black and white photograph of a horse-drawn carriage. The carriage is a large, ornate vehicle with a high roof and open sides. It is pulled by a team of four horses, two in front and two behind. Several people are seated in the carriage, including a driver at the front and passengers. A small dog is visible in the foreground, running towards the carriage. The background is slightly blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting.

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wine

On working to preserve Bordeaux as the world's largest fine wine region

Michael Broadbent



Earlier this year an Englishman was elected president of the l'Union des Grands Crus de Bordeaux. Peter Allan Sichel is a highly respected 47-year-old Bordeaux *négociant*. His family firm owns 34 per cent of the renowned Château Palmer, and he lives at the neighbouring Château d'Angludet. The "Union of Great Growths" is a relatively new organisation which represents the first real attempt to draw together the top producers from the major districts on a more personal level to encourage the pursuit of quality. The Union claims not to be an aristocracy of the élite, but open to all châteaux proprietors who are able to prove to the committee that they are willing not only to put quality before quantity but also quality before short-term financial gain.

Reducing yields is one way of increasing quality. This is achieved by more thorough pruning, and even by reducing the number of bunches on the vine later in the growing season; by more rigid selectivity at harvest time and, finally, by eliminating or demoting the inferior vats.

The increase in the number and volume of second wines of famous châteaux is evidence of this: Les Forts de Latour, Pavillon Rouge du Château Margaux, Connétable de Talbot are just a few. It must be emphasised that second wines are not merely cast-offs. A good proportion of Les Forts and Pavillon Rouge is made up of wine made from young vines which will, when a little older and more mature, contribute their ripe grapes to the *grands vins*.

Many proprietors are refused entry to the Union and, if standards slip, members are occasionally asked to resign. At present it is 120 châteaux strong. All the great *appellations* of Bordeaux are represented. For the consumer this can only be a good thing ■

ENGRAVING BY JONATHAN GIBBS

Not the easiest of places to find, Blake's Hotel is tucked away in a posh residential area south of Old Brompton Road. You go down a sort of companion-way from the foyer into a smallish, darkish eating area with a piece of drawing-room, or pricey dentist's waiting-room, off to one side. Here you may look through large, illustrated works on perfume, cologne and scent bottles or the gardens of the Italian villas, and try not to scoff a lot of those incredible Japanese biscuits while very well-made drinks are brought. They also bring a plate of *won ton*, little crispy pancakes with a hot gingery sauce, even harder to resist, and the edge may be off your appetite by the time you shuffle to table.

That would be a pity, at any rate at lunch-time. The menu covers a lot of ground from England to Japan and back: rack of lamb, scrambled eggs with smoked salmon, Dutch calf's liver served off lava rock, whatever that is, ravioli and of course *gyuniku teriyaki* with *sake*. I went for the last-mentioned and it was memorably marvellous. *Sake* I knew, that disagreeable rice-beer Westerners are warned to be careful of—and with reason: once when I warmed some up, as you are supposed to do, it took all the deposit off the lining of my saucepan, so God knows what it does to the lining of your stomach. But the rest was a big surprise, beef long marinated in soy sauce, served with ginger and really edible seaweed but otherwise recalling what English beef was once like at its best.

Here I go enthusing about the food already, justifiably though, for the *gyuniku* stuff was part of the best lunch I have had for a long time. I suppose I was feeling adventurous; if not I doubt whether I would have gone for something called *pavé* of herring and eel with basil and ginger. *Pavé* is associated in my mind with cobble-stones, and what was on the plate looked a bit like a couple of semi-transparent chunks of street, but it tasted like the finest of all jellied eels plus a lot, a worthy starter for what followed. My guest's starter was also popular, a *filetto carpaccio*, those little tasty discs of raw or rare roast beef. Her main course was steamed scallops with cumin, fried seaweed and turmeric—three cheers once more.

restaurants

West meets East and finds lava rocks and seaweed more acceptable at lunchtime

Kingsley Amis

Blake's is the kind of establishment that gets called exclusive, and it was so much that way the time we lunched there that it excluded everybody but the two of us. But the staff were so welcoming and helpful that the atmosphere was cosy, not bleak. True, there was music, which I find the more distracting the better I like what is being played, and I asked them to turn down the Mozart violin concerto. They did, though not very far, explaining that it kept the parakeet quiet. Well, in Mozart's absence he was certainly kicking up a hell of a row when we subsequently turned up for dinner.

As so often, an evening visit was half a step down from the heights of lunch. Is it simply having more people to cook for and attend to? The service was as friendly as

before but perceptibly slower. The food was still good, or most of it. I led off with gazpacho which, for the benefit of anyone just back from the moon, is a cold Spanish soup. What seems to be less well known, in this country anyway, is that the vegetable-and-vinaigrette mixture needs thinning with water. They got that right at Blake's and the result was delicious. So was the raw fish hors d'oeuvre and the roast quail with lime and honey. The Szechuan duck, however, which ought to have been the star of the show, was a boring flop. And I, for one, thought the vegetables were rather dull, too. Puddings were excellent.

The wine list at Blake's is short and rather steep. There are house wines at £11 and we did nicely in the £30-plus range, but the summit, a La Mission-Haut Brion 1966, admittedly a great year, is soon reached at £205. I am sure it would be as well kept and expertly presented as our choices were, but I would not consider the wines in general an added attraction.

I hope I have shown that you can have a jolly good time at Blake's,

DOVRAT BEN NAHUM



6 As so often, an evening visit was half a step down from the heights of lunch. The service was as friendly as before but it was perceptibly slower

and certainly it goes on to my short list of places to be taken to for lunch. If a dish here or there lets you down there is always the Anouska Hempel décor—mirrors, black walls, what looks like a samurai warrior's best suit—to goggle at. Restaurant prices have shot up all over London but I still think you pay too much at Blake's for what you actually get ■

Blake's Hotel Restaurant, 33 Roland Gardens, SW7 (370 6701). Daily 12.30-2.30pm, 7.30-11.30pm. About £85 for two, excluding wine.

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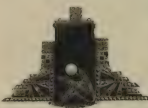


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Rosanna Greenstreet

There is perhaps no better place to equip a house than the Brompton Cross, an area which has recently grown up around the intersection of Fulham Road and Brompton Road in South Kensington. Everything from mirror glass to high tech lighting, Indian rugs to French tiles, corkscrews to glass tables, can be found.

The shops in Draycott Avenue and Walton Street have always specialised in a rather chintzy style, but latterly shops with a much more contemporary thrust have opened along Fulham and Brompton Roads. These, together with the refurbishment of the Michelin building by Terence Conran, have established the area as the most stylish for interior design in London. There are other good areas—Pimlico Road for example—but the choice at the Brompton Cross is now far greater.

We start at the Conran Shop in the ground and basement levels of the Michelin building, which also contains the fine Bibendum Restaurant, an Oyster Bar and a publishing company. The standard of design, despite the frequently stated view that Conran is conventional and unimaginative, is extremely high. Things you buy at The Conran Shop usually combine function, elegance and durability.

There are white oak tables scrubbed with salt water, wonderful cane furniture, and, at the more exotic end of the range, sofas that imitate the contours of the human body and a surreal light-shade that resembles a giant aluminium jelly mould. There's an entire dressing room housed in a massive walk-in wardrobe for £8,500. You can sift through fabulous rugs from Persia, Iran and Turkey, and admire the handsome antique pine mirrors and peer into a collection of massive glazed urns. The Conran Shop also has a good selection of bedding and

material for curtains and upholstery, but for original fabric ideas it is worth exploring the smaller shops in the area.

Fulham 72, in Fulham Road, sells Paisley throws, tapestries, silk brocade curtains with heavy cord ties, needlepoint seat covers, and quilts, dating from the turn of the century. Fulham Road has long been famous for its antique shops. The oldest, Pelham Galleries, established in 1928, specialises in English and Continental pieces dating from the 18th century. They have a spinet, and what must be the original executive toy, an electrostatic machine. By turning a handle, this device generates a minute crackle of electricity from a piece of silk.

The Fulham Road is rich in ideas. Souleido draws inspiration from the past, their vibrantly coloured chairs are based on 18th-century designs and produced exclusively in Provence. Antarcia Design across the road will hand paint exquisite cushions to any colour specifications. Lewis M. Kaplan and Associates boast a showroom of silver candleabra and cutlery designed by Puiforcat in Paris in the 1920s and 30s as well as 30s vases which start at £1,000.

"Divertimenti" is Italian for "things for fun", but this shop has everything for the serious cook, as well as more frivolous hand-decorated tableware. The London Lighting Company sells functional fittings and imaginative creations such as the large Egg light by Fontana Arte or Design M's Ya Ya Ho, which resembles an illuminated three dimensional Miró. LeSet sell televisions, video and hi-fi equipment—but only high-performance good looks.

In the Brompton Road, Waldorf Carpets pride themselves on their ability to translate any idea into carpeting, whether it be a special border, tiled effect, animal skin, or

even patchwork. Further up the road, Domus Tile Shop is a riot of ceramics and inlaid marbles for walls and floors.

Walton Street is the place to pick out pictures. The Sara Davenport Gallery specialises in dogs, Oliver Swann has marine and coastal paintings, Malcolm Innes sells Scottish sporting and natural history subjects, and Walker Bagshawe offers turn-of-the-century figurative studies. John Campbell's shop takes care of your reframing needs.

You can find everything for the nursery in Dragons which is reputed to be a favourite with the Princesses of Wales and the Duchess of York. An impressive childsize sofa with matching armchairs is perfect for little bottoms, royal or otherwise. But, if wallpaper bunnies' bootails are the style of the nursery, visit Nursery Window. Opposite, Percy Bliss was the prize for the most untidy shop in Walton Street. Under a hotchpot of interesting fabric swathes lurk peculiar painted chairs and lampstands. Wesley Barrel have specialised in hand-finished sofas for 100 years, and claim a choice of 8,000 fabric designs. Carrow-Jones sell custom-made British furniture and can produce wonderful lacquer cabinets to hide the telly or stereo if it doesn't match up to the posh on sale at LeSet.

The Eastern Accents emporium has stunning antique and reproduction Korean furniture. They favour intricately carved chests and painted mirrors in different colours and shapes. You can also pick up a good talking point in the shape of a wooden angel from Thailand for £120, or an Indonesian puppet for £39. Objects like this hint at exotic travels, even if you have only been as far east as Bethnal Green!

To add the finishing touches to your home, visit the Flower House in Brompton Road. Ignore the

rather tame house plants and dried flowers, and choose instead an astonishingly delicate silk wisteria at £125, or a fuchsia at £450. They flower forever, they don't get leaf mould, and the only maintenance they need is an occasional blast from a hair dryer to disperse any dust.

However, if head spinning and footsores, you are confused by all that's on offer in Brompton Cross, then a trip to the basement bookshelves in The Conran Shop may help. Here you'll find instant style, be it French, Italian, or even Caribbean, waiting to be absorbed and made your own.

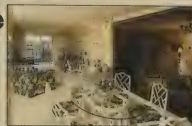
Addresses of shops mentioned:

The Conran Shop, Michelin House, 81 Fulham Rd
Fulham 72, 72 Fulham Rd
Pelham Galleries, 163 Fulham Rd
H C Basser & Sons Antiques, 191-193 Fulham Rd
Souleido Ltd, 171 Fulham Rd
Antarcia Design, 48 Fulham Rd
Lewis M Kaplan and Associates, 30 Fulham Rd
Divertimenti, 139-141 Fulham Rd
London Lighting Co. Ltd, 133 Fulham Rd
Waldorf Carpets, 28 Brompton Rd
Domus Tiles, 266 Brompton Rd
The Sara Davenport Gallery, 206 Walton St
Oliver Swann Gallery, 117a-119 Walton St
Malcolm Innes Gallery, 172 Walton St
Walker Bagshawe, 73 Walton St
John Campbell, 164 Walton St
Nursery Window, 81 Walton St
Dragons, 23 Walton St
Percy Bliss, 184 Fulham Rd
Wesley Barrel, 198 Walton St
Carrow-Jones and Associates, 188 Walton St
LeSet Ltd, 115 Fulham Rd
Eastern Accents, 111 Walton St
Flower House, 315 Brompton Rd

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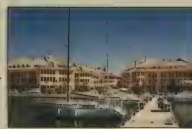


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A POET LOVED AND LOATHED

Jeremy Reed is the archetypal poet. He has long, thick hair, wears black clothes onto which are pinned various items of glittering jewellery, and is permanently wreathed in strong scent. His movements are delicate, his voice quiet and musical, his whole manner one of quivering sensitivity. And he lives in Hampstead. He is, in the literal meaning of the term, an aesthete—a lover of beauty. It is this last quality which, he feels, places him most at odds with the contemporary poetry scene: “I still believe there are beautiful things in this world. There is so much ugliness and poets don’t rise above it. They indulge in it instead.”

Beauty as a quality to be celebrated on its own has been out of fashion in English verse at least since, appropriately enough, the First World War. The soft idylls of the Georgians were never going to be a match for the 20th century. But Reed is far from being a Georgian throw-back, or even, given his get-up, a Swinburnian. Whereas that last *fin-de-siècle* Romantic gasp was all susurrations of sexuality and sound, swooning into the abstract, Reed’s poetry is loaded with good, concrete ore; his subjects are mostly drawn from the natural world—although he refuses to be called a Nature Poet—and they are itemised and vivified in an almost obsessional manner, as if by recording their minutiae his language somehow takes on the substance of the tulip, or the wave, or as here, ivy:

*You smell rain coming on in ivy leaves,
their coolness has the sheen of green satin,
or by the garden trellis pointing down
each lance-head’s deckled by a silver line
or tongued with yellow.*

To describe something organic without striking an attitude is courting danger these days. Reed courts it, the danger being the intrinsic failure of the poem to say anything beyond mere description, and the resulting censure from steely-eyed critics. But in poem after poem Reed succeeds through the sheer intensity of his gaze and through the lyrical quality of his language; not with every poem, it must be said, but given Reed’s prolific output (“two a day”) this is hardly surprising.

This risk of censure has visited Reed in abundance. No other poet has had such a savaging at

**No contemporary British poet arouses
such extremes of passion as**

Jeremy Reed. Adam Thorpe asks why

PATRICK GORMAN



the hands of reviewers. His five collections—including the Penguin *Selected Poems*—have attracted virulent put-downs seemingly designed to sink him forever; “cheap, nasty and dated at its worst” and a personal accusation of vanity in two separate reviews in the *TLS*, and terms like “lurid” and “junk” in *The Observer*. His readings have been laughed at, his work seldom taken seriously. And yet he counts among his fervent supporters such luminaries as Seamus Heaney, Ted Hughes, David Lodge, (“a remarkable lyric gift”), Kathleen Raine, Terry Eagleton, (“Subtle verbal intelligence, flashing with an imaginative wit”), J. G. Ballard, and a large following who have pushed his latest book, *Engaging Form* (published this year by Cape) into fourth position (at time of writing) on the *Guardian*’s Poetry Best-Sellers List—perhaps a contradiction in terms, but still. As one reviewer put it: “no poet in England polarises opinion more violently than Jeremy Reed.” Why?

Reed is quick to provide an answer. “I’m an effigy for the bloodless poets, those whose inner vision is fossilised, who dare not use their imagination: the journalistic cliques who have killed English poetry, its lyrical spirit. So much modern poetry is mere reportage.” Behind that gentle façade there is a fiercer Reed, one whose invective, uttered in terse, chant-like statements, is either the result of an embattled position or the cause. Judgments like “the *Poetry Review* is just a garage manual” or “the Poetry Society is an enemy to good poetry” are hardly likely to endear him to the powers-that-be.

In the swirling waters of the literati, conspiracy theories abound—and none is held more tenaciously than the accusation that the ironic, *sotto voce* tone of those who trace a line through Hardy, Edward Thomas and Larkin (or just Auden), has seized the heights of the publishing houses and the reviewing journals to the detri-

ment of post-Romantic lyricism, or what some call High Rhetoric (as quintessentially illustrated by Dylan Thomas). This is partly the result of that revolution known as Modernism, which some would say was élitist and took poetry away from the people: all that cultural reference in great swathes of free verse, all that knowing urban irony.

But Hardy & Co are hardly Modernist; what they share above all is an ironic simplicity and a stoic quietness. One can happily trace this back to Wordsworth, but it came into its own with “The Movement” in the 50s, of whom Larkin, with his self-denigrating air of dismissal and doubt, is the great exemplar. Between these two currents both Keatsian richness and the vatic tone have had a hard job making it through to the late 20th century—at least in English verse (in Russia, curiously, they have survived rather well in poets like Akhmatova or Mandelstam).

Reed, however, while clearly indebted to Ted Hughes—who many feel is an impossible act to follow, appropriating both rhetoric and nature like a late Expressionist—comes from an altogether un-English tradition. Rilke, Rimbaud and Baudelaire are his models. Thus he seems to fuse the native muscularity and down-to-earthness of a Hughes with the scented, twilight, heady symbolism of the French poets. He read Rimbaud and Baudelaire as a boy, as well as Yeats, the Romantics, Hopkins and Hughes. Just to prove that a poet’s style is to be found in the topography of childhood, Reed was born and brought up on Jersey, itself a fusion of French and English. The island also gave him his heightened colour spectrum—“Jersey has three seas surging around it, each with its own light”—his empathy with nature, and his rhythm, which is as he describes it “long-shore tidal”.

The image of the poet as fisherman and as surfer (the latter dangerously riding “the next wave’s towering overreach”, attempting “to choreographise each new/breaker’s overhang”) emerges again and again in his work. The fisherman is watchful, possessive; the surfer rides a great energy, as Reed’s poems do. Acquisitiveness and release, control (Reed has a tight, frequently rhyming form) and spontaneity: these common poetic opposites are tensely drawn in Reed’s poetry and often snap. But when he manages to play them off against each other the result is exhilarating; his rich, clotted lines achieving an extraordinary swoop and roll, the last line leaving the reader on a kind of breathless rebound.

Not that all his poems are about plants, animals or the sea. His third book, *Nero* (1985), has as its title poem a *tour de force* of repressed



PATRICK GORMAN

Giant Surf for Michael Armstrong

*We can't locate its place of origin,
this running wall, and its each successor
that breaks a mile out on a reef, then runs*

*at the gradient of a razor blade,
slightly atilt, and is the pilot wave
of that fomenting wreath of swell that's stayed*

*by opposition of a barrier,
and gaining momentum flicks the white crest
it inclines vertically, then waterfalls*

*into the wave's advance, and white water
boils dazglingly at three times a man's height,
and expends itself in measured thunder*

*across the wide flat of Atlantic beach,
and in its outgoing rebuffs, but can't
impede, the next wave's towering overreach*

*that scuttles surfers, who in red and blue
attempt to choreographise each new
breaker's overhang, then fallen, review*

*the bay's slate-blue corrugations for that
one freak wave climbing to obliterate
the skyline, and on whose crest they'll lie flat,*

*pinpointing balance, vibrant in the light
of the spray's iridescence, until thrown,
they are towed forward, and surface to fight*

*the backlash that will wash them out to sea,
and winded, bask awhile in the shallows,
bodies aglow with that salt energy,*

*as though light formed a film on their torsos,
and left their flesh-tones a beaten silver.
They stand there, twenty of them, flecked with snow,*

*wading back into breakers, slipping free
into their element, while the sheer air
rings with each new wave's volubility.*

anger in which the peccadilloes of the tyrant are enumerated "to cure/the harsh exile of one Sosianus". His latest book has poems about London, as well as a series of futurist landscapes that J. G. Ballard has praised as the result of a "uniquely powerful imagination". And in all his collections there are people: the pub regular, "One of a kind who finds sanctuary here", lonely and "inscrutable"—a particularly fine and compassionate portrait; the *demi-monde* of island artists; or those who turn the text into emotional dramas—*Sea Room*, for instance, with its paradisaal opening ("both stripped to swim, treading water, upright/as glass-blue bottlenecks in that gully").

Reed also translates and his versions of Montale, which are published in the *Selected Poems*, are very successful. "Montale lived on the Ligurian coast and the rhythm of the sea is there in his verse. Some of his poems are a single sentence, continued through flux and reflux, like incoming waves." This made me think of Reed's own liking for drawn-out sentences, strings of parentheses or substantives tied only by commas. His use of commas has worried me—I sometimes wish he had discovered the semi-colon—but perhaps the way in which they allow each sentence or part of a sentence to spill into the next is in itself wave-like and an essential part of his effect. One in the eye for his detractors?

Unlikely. To return to the conspiracy theory. It is quite true, as Reed says, that the "Post-Movement" Larkinites have a lot of clout at present; it is quite possible, for instance, to be reviewed almost solely by those poets published by Chatto & Windus, whose editor is Andrew Motion, Larkin's biographer and one of the leading Post-Movement poets. Reed has certainly suffered at their hands: in the *TLS* and *The Independent* particularly. But does this amount to a wholesale attack on the Romantic, the lyrical, on poems whose subjects are non-urban and which avoid the witty or the urbane, as Reed says it does?

Andrew Motion vigorously denies the charge. "Reed can't reserve the term *lyrical* for himself. I'm not against lyric—I think of Tennyson, some of Larkin, of Wordsworth. They wrote in a simple language, very different to Reed's clogged, hyperactive lines. And the idea of a conspiracy is just silly. The Chatto poets don't have a Party line. I love Peter Redgrove and Geoffrey Hill, neither of whom can possibly be termed Post-Movement. Sorry!"

The case rests there. One thing is certain; the poet who has lived for his craft, supported by friends, who makes up in white face-paint and kohl pencil to write, who has attracted both vitriol and votive tributes, who produces two poems a day to most of our two lines, will not give up what he sees as a struggle to return poetry to its lyrical, vatic throne: "I am starting a magazine called *The Nineties* for poets with imagination, my book on poetry and madness is coming out soon, and I am planning an epic sea poem, 300 lines long, which will contain all seas." The surfer hasn't fallen yet ■

Jeremy Reed will be reading at the Riverside Studios, Crisp Road, Hammersmith, W6, on November 20. Poem taken from *Selected Poems* (King Penguin).

cinema

Veronico Cruz, Stand and Deliver

Nicholas Shakespeare

Miguel Pereira graduated from the London International Film School on the day that his country invaded a windswept piece of real-estate off the Patagonian coast. In making *Veronico Cruz*, he achieves his ambition to fuse the British and Argentinian cultures; also to direct a feature by his 30th birthday.

Veronico Cruz is a young man's film, containing some of the vices but all of the virtues this implies. Like one of the flowers that sprout in the desert during the Nino drought—often flowers no botanist alive has ever seen—it develops a life of its own. In no way can it be called partisan.

It is the story of a boy who grows up in a remote valley in northern Argentina. His mother dies when giving birth to him. His father goes

policeman decanted into a pair of trousers too small for him. One day a man (Juan Jose Camero) arrives on a mule. He announces himself as the teacher. He has come to teach the children how to read and write.

Under his guidance, Veronico reads about 19th-century British ratings in the Royal Navy. He asks what the sea is like. "Big," says the teacher. "Very big." Veronico goes down to the white salt flats—cracked like his grandmother's face—and imagines the sound of the gulls and the waves.

Then, over the radio, they hear of the 1976 military coup. When the writer Jorge Luis Borges was told the news he is reported to have rejoiced. "Now we are governed by gentlemen," he said. Living in

Argentina at the time, I remember only the street-level fear like a blanket fog; the cars with tinted windows that surged forward with their sirens moaning—a hostage in the back, a maniac at the wheel; the men in Papa Doc spectacles who spread my arms against a wall each time I went into town; the anonymous gunshots.

This is the fear that comes to Veronico's hamlet in the back of a pick-up. The fat policeman is put in charge. He bans the old man from listening to his radio. He asks the teacher to read out the titles of books that are forbidden (the teacher gives him a *History of Man's Stupidity*). He buys a ghetto-blaster so the village can listen to the World Cup. The ghetto-blaster goes wrong. The Argentine flags he distributes are made in the British colony of Hong Kong. These flags will be waved one more time during the military football match in the South Pacific while Veronico is serving as a rating on board the *Belgrano*—and so achieving his life's ambition of going to sea.

Pereira makes these touches

**René Olaguivel plays the
commissioner and Ana Maria
Gonzales the grandmother**



without comment or judgment. His film is a beautiful account of a boy who flowers in stony soil. It is as much a film about the Falklands war as *Put Out More Flags* is a book about the trenches. Do not be put

off by propaganda. Go and see it.

Pereira based his story on that of a teacher called Fortunato Ramos. *Stand and Deliver* is also based on a teacher's life, that of the Bolivian-born Jaime Escalante who coached mathematics at a down-and-out high school in Los Angeles. His pupils were mainly the deprived children of Spanish-speaking immigrants. Their future lay in clipping the poodle tails of the rich, or collecting garbage. In 1982 Escalante badgered them into taking the calculus exam. They all passed—with such distinction that the examiners accused them of cheating.

Written by director Ramon Menendez and producer Tom Musca, *Stand and Deliver* is a good, clean, beat-the-system movie. It ponders a little here and there, but only when it strays out of the charged atmosphere of the classroom. The teaching of calculus is made convincing and dramatic and not until the end do we know whether or not the students—few of whom had acted before—did actually cheat.

Escalante is played by Edward James Olmos, famous as the mellifluous Lieutenant Castillo in *Miami Vice*. They don't come more doleful than Eddie Olmos. On television, he has struck me as having the face of a wet tobacco leaf in search of a thigh to roll on. For his screen role he has put on 40 pounds and thinned his hair, which makes him look even more unappetising. But with his golfing cap, his pretty wife and his homespun wisdom—"if you don't sign, you don't get a ticket to watch the show"—he is the incarnation of a monomaniac who could simultaneously scare the hell out of his dope-taking students and inspire them into learning the gobbledygook required for the calculus exam.

When the authorities level their accusation, Olmos says proudly of his class: "They learned if you try really hard, nothing changes." But this is Eddie being doleful again, and the once-deprived class of 82 are soon set to join the poodle-owning brotherhood of all-America. *Que suerte*, as they say in Argentina. What luck ■

Nicholas Shakespeare is Literary Editor of *The Daily Telegraph*.

Belgrano bound: Gonzalo Morales plays Veronico Cruz, the Argentinian boy



to the city to seek work, leaving the child in his grandmother's bony hands. Few words are spoken. Communication comes about through long, intent stares. Gradually one becomes hypnotised by the clarity of the light which gives to everything—the red mountains, the dung-coloured goats, the lapis sky—its exact measure of colour. After a while, as in no film I have seen recently, it is as if you are there.

Veronico's village is a scatter of stone houses. They are inhabited by an old man who listens to Brazilian radio, a government representative who wears a cardigan, and a fat

6 One becomes
hypnotised by the
clarity of light which
gives to everything its
exact measure of
colour... A beautiful
account of a boy
who flowers in stony
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theatre

Double Act

"A wickedly funny comedy!", "A tour di-voce!" brayed the billboards outside Jeffrey Archer's Playhouse. Hyperbole of this sort can hardly come as a shock from an organisation run by the man who once proclaimed himself the Charles Dickens of our time, exceeding though it does the normal, far from rigorous standards of West End fanfaring. Barry Creyton's uncomfortable two-hander, *Double Act*, was ill-served by these gushings. What is intriguing is to wonder why a show needed to be sold in a fashion so crude and dishonest? Why dress mutton up like that when there's lamb to be had from every butcher? This play, so suddenly taken off, needs comment.

The trouble with *Double Act* started long before it reached the Playhouse. Somewhere deep in the mists of its production history—Australia, South Africa, Windsor—there was once the protozoon of a good play. It is the familiar story of a couple for whom the forces of attraction are as strong as those of repulsion: George and Alexandra have been married and divorced, but a chance encounter at a dinner party (he gives a hand to retrieve her broken bra strap, she sorts out the jam in his flies) makes them admit that they still have business to finish.

The play is an account of a disastrous post-marital affair—a tragedy, no less—in which George's latent homosexuality and unsuitability for any kind of relationship forces both characters to expel an awful lot of bile. The situation may ring some bells and the script somewhat unwisely makes references to Noël Coward's *Private Lives*, with which it compares most unfavourably, and, indeed, to Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

Someone, somewhere along the line—and it may well have been Mr Creyton himself—decided that this might make a better comedy. Why? I ask again. Because comedy sells better. And in today's jittery West End you could not see a commercial manager leaping at a bitter, or even a bitter-sweet, tragedy about

two incompatible people who love each other. Not even *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* unless you could get Burton and Taylor for it.

So Mr Creyton (who told us in a programme note that he had a lot of trouble over this piece) vamped up the first-half jokes ("I wouldn't come back to your place if the bars of the world had run dry", "So a fuck's out of the question, then?") made it a little naughty (*adult* comedy always pushes a few tickets) and kept the tear-jerk stuff for the final act, by which time we were all supposed to have laughed ourselves into anaesthesia. Director Nicholas Renton, faced with this extraordinary mixed grill, decided on a smothering of irony and, with the help of game funsters Lisa Harrow and Simon Cadell, gave the whole a circus theme. Oompah music played as a light-board gave a title to each scene: "And now... to thrill you... to excite you... to titillate you... the Lion Tamer and the Human Cannonball."

The saddest fact that underlies one's contempt for all this theatrical vandalism is that the chances of these shenanigans being worthwhile are minimal. *Double Act*, surprisingly, was pulled off although Cadell, certainly in the top rank of youngish middlebrow actors, could have been expected to sell it on reputation. But the play, as Mr Creyton knows, is a lie—and I hope he has an ex-wife around to tell him so. The hard truth remains that while some comedy sells, new comedy does not. The market is soured. *Double Act* was short-lived, like other recent productions at the Playhouse. The theatre seems ill-fated, almost cursed.

There is no new comedy in the West End for the autumn. At the beginning of October there were five shows in town whose primary intention was to make you smile. Two were revivals—Coward's *Easy Virtue* and a very early Alan Ayckbourn, *How The Other Half Loves*. Then there was a revivalist show: Maureen Lipman's *Re: Joyce!*, an impersonation of Grenfell and a rehearsal of some of her great

monologues. It is perhaps an indication of the starvation conditions that West End audiences are undergoing that something as reliable as a Lipman/Grenfell marriage should sell out so fast and so completely that I was unable to get a ticket at any time to review it.

There is Michael Frayn's collection of Chekhov shorts, *The*

6 The saddest fact that underlies one's contempt for all this theatrical vandalism is that the chances of these shenanigans being worthwhile are minimal 9

pieces the beginnings of a great tragic actor. But there's no denying that without Atkinson's, Frayn's and Timothy West's talents this compendium of what is effectively Chekhov's juvenilia would be revealed as the panic-stricken, barrel-scraping exercise it is.

And finally another revival in form, if not content. Sir Brian Rix returned, after seven years, to farce with John Chapman's 1954 *Dry Rot*. Call me cynical, call me callous, but there is surely something wrong with the state of British comedy if Sir Brian feels the need to leave off helping the mentally handicapped to bring his talents to the aid of the West End.

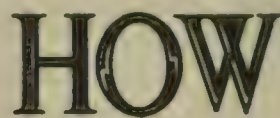
Need we care? The simple explanation for the dearth of new, commercial comic writing talent is that they have all shuffled to television, and there is no denying that the box is the best place for one-set situation comedy. If the West End can hold its audience with big names and big revivals then we shall all survive. But the broadcast media are brimming with intelligent,



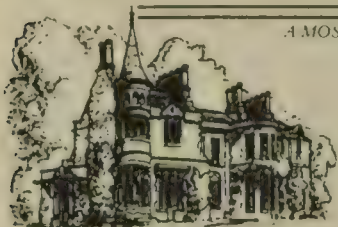
Sneezing: Olga Lowe, Timothy West, Rowan Atkinson and Cheryl Campbell

Sneeze—selling on names: Frayn's, Rowan Atkinson's but not, it must be said, Chekhov's. Rowan Atkinson does all he was asked in comic terms and some critics have seen in his performance of the darker

funny writers and all it would take is a sensible producer with a modicum of courage to find the conditions and the billings to get them into the theatre. We all need a good, freshly-minted belly-laugh ■



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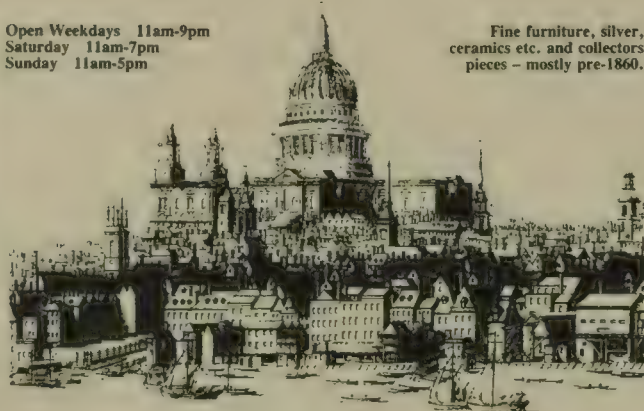
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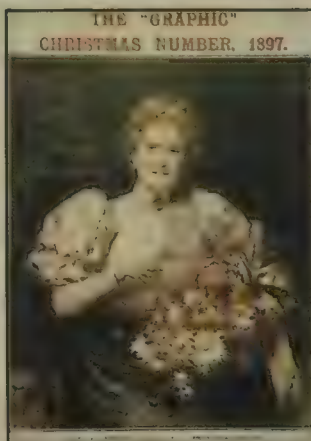
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books

Candia McWilliam

The Lost Father

by Marina Warner

Chatto & Windus, £11.95

Marina Warner's *The Lost Father* is her third and best novel. It tells the story of the narrator's maternal grandfather, Davide Pittagora, who is the "lost father" of the title. Anna's mother, Fantina, the youngest of Davide's five children, is the widow of an Englishman. Anna is their only child.

The book begins in 1985 but returns to the beginning of the century with a simple, effective device: Anna is writing a novel—*The Duel*—about her grandfather, born in 1897, who died young of lead poisoning from pellets lodged in his skull during a duel. What was the reason for the duel? Anna, a modern young woman, intelligent, apparently unillusioned, attempting to ally what she knows of the present with what she can imagine of the past, thinks she knows, and *The Duel* is written around that assumption. Anna is certain that Davide was defending the honour of his sisters, fat, great-hearted Rosalba and lovely Caterina, against his childhood friend, the rampant Tomasso Talvi, a soldier follower of "The Leader" which is how she refers to Mussolini throughout the book.

The novel within the novel builds up to the actual duel and falls away from it with the momentum art can impose on the shapelessness of life. Davide's childhood, the rhythms of life in the far south of Italy, the rituals, superstitions and conventions of a family not rich but *perbene*, the sense of an Italy only ostensibly united, are vividly conveyed. Behind the feminine domestic dailiness, we sense the masculine world of politics and confrontation massing itself, with Tomasso its symptom in his easy-come, easy-go northern brutality. Davide, by contrast, is a boy of principle, fastidious and musical. We sense the ancient Greek in him. He is not weak but he cannot care for the bullying Roman strength he sees increasing about him.

Later, recovered though not healed after the duel, he marries Maria Filippa and, with his sisters, they emigrate to America. His first child, a baby boy, dies on the

voyage. We read of the death in Davide's journal. It is a movingly simple account. Rosalba and Caterina settle with their families in America. Davide and Maria Filippa live, with other immigrants, in destitution; their family grows. They return to Italy to the place where Davide grew up. Life sweetens. We see Davide's love for all his daughters, especially for little Fantina, who has the slim beauty of her aunt Caterina, an elegance like the figures painted on those Greek-influenced southern Italian vases.

Through the more recent history of Italy, its far past constantly glows or frowns, a continuity emphasised by Marina Warner in sensuous descriptions of landscape, food and custom. Is it to escape this world of emotion, heat and the past that Fantina chooses to marry an Englishman? Englishness at its most sheenless is implied with telling touches;

our uninspiring drinks, our lightlessness and heavy ways.

It is not just Marina Warner who is a mistress of detail. She has made her Anna curator of ephemera at the "Museum of Albion". This invention heralds a lighter vein in the book. There are some good jokes ("Pola Negri" for a sort of Italian baked Alaska).

With Anna we move to the now of the book and out of the interior novel. Anna, her mother, and her small son Nicholas, from whose father (another lost father?) Anna is separated, go to visit Fantina's sisters, the "American girls". We meet them, poolside, natty, prosperous but still touchingly Italian at heart. It is a women's world, husbands in the background. They all pet the little boy, who plays with his ephemeral toys of aggression and assault. Anna's eye for minutiae has been adumbrated in the domestic

thrift and incessant providence of her female forbears. Fantina is appalled by the promiscuous wastefulness of the Saxon races.

In the end it is a scrap of ephemera, a newspaper cutting sent by cousin Pia, whom she has never met, which shakes up the rational picture Anna has so painstakingly made, partly as a gift for her mother, partly as a purge for herself. Was the duel over female honour? Or was it over politics? Was Davide not only a man of private honour but also a man of public principle, fighting the fascist Tomasso? The readjustment we have to make is Marina Warner's highest achievement in her fiction so far. She is acknowledging all sorts of unmodern truths, not all of which will please her more gynocentric admirers.

War, in Davide's story, comes eventually to be seen to eclipse the luxuriant dialectic of the sex war. To Anna's original way of thinking, the history of her family is inevitably sexual history, full, perhaps too full, of chivalry and dishonour, palpitating women and their tumescent menfolk. The book's surprising close brings the reader to a less partial view of life. In the funniest scene in the book, Anna is wooed by an old-fashioned flirt. It is an indication of her growth in perception that she succumbs.

This book has a certain ease which helps it to carry its themes. It manages to skirt that informative and opinionated historical manner which is inimical to fiction. It has physical energy and the language is ambitious, if very occasionally confused or bombastic. With a subject to which the author could not be closer (the book is dedicated to Marina Warner's Italian mother and her sisters) she has achieved the distance necessary for a writer to involve and convince the reader.

Apart from its southern setting *The Lost Father* does not remotely resemble Lampedusa's *The Leopard*, still less, as Chatto's publicity department embarrassingly claims, Visconti's film of *The Leopard*, thus joining the ranks of publishers who apparently feel shifty about purveying the printed word. Still, the unchanging nature of human spots is one of Ms Warner's themes ■



HENRY BOURNE

Marina Warner: her book has energy and is rich with sensuous description

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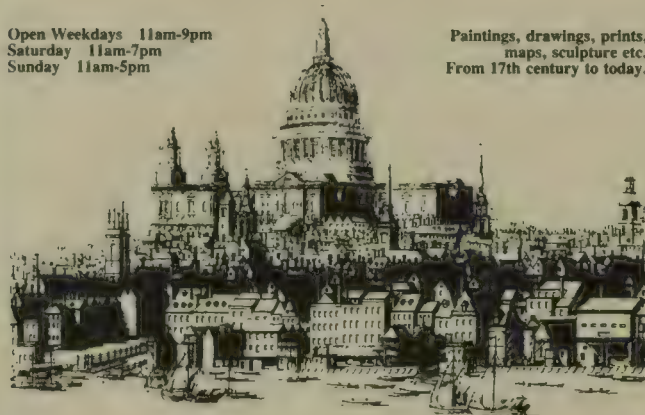
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Agnelli and the Network of Italian Power

by Alan Friedman

Harper £12.95

Long before publication this work had become much more than a book in Italy. It was a minor sensation and a *cause célèbre*. The reason for this was that the Milan correspondent of one of the most staid and respected of foreign journals in Italy, *The Financial Times*, had dared to criticise the country's most powerful industrial and political leader, Gianni Agnelli, Chairman of Fiat, and at the same time damn nearly all his works and those of his family and associates.

At one level the book is a racy political thriller, in style more like the glossy Italian weeklies than the reserved tones of the British financial press—brash, crude and colourful in the writing. En route the outsider will learn a great deal about the weird jungle of Italian political and financial intrigue, with many a reference to Machiavelli and the domestic mores of the Cosche and clans of the Sicilian Cosa Nostra, and may wonder how much of this will infect the habits of northern Europe when EEC rules change for the single unified market.

Story and thesis are relatively simple. Playboy Prince Charming Giovanni (Gianni) Agnelli inherits at the end of the Second World War the auto and munitions business founded at the turn of the century by his grandfather, also Giovanni Agnelli. The company did well from the First World War and from arming the fascist armies of the Second World War, but by 1946 the country was in ruins and the old firm a little frayed round the edges. But the playboy prince decided to go on playing for another 20 years, to take up the reins as effective company chairman only in 1966.

Since then both he and his company have had a bumpy ride, but the story is ultimately one of huge financial and political gain. Today Fiat dominates the Milan stock exchange, owns roughly a quarter of all Italian industry, making anything from cars to munitions, missiles and newspapers, and is both bully and watch-

dog to political parties and governments in Rome. Friedman shows that for all the seeming modernity, both family and company work through private networks in the old Mediterranean tradition of patronage and power, the infamous Italian *clientela* (clientage) and *parentela* (family patrimony). He argues in

considerable detail that the Fiat and Agnelli *modus operandi* is questionable by accepted business standards north of the Alps and in America. He suggests that the power of Fiat and the Agnelli family is unhealthy for Italy, now claiming to be the fifth industrial power of the western world. In the parlance of

the Wars of the Roses, with which the story has much in common, they are over-mighty subjects.

The argument is illustrated by such instances as the Fiat take-over of Alfa Romeo, the bizarre share deal with Gaddafi's Libya, the sale of mines from a Fiat subsidiary to Argentina during the Falklands campaign, a project by another subsidiary, SNIA-BPD, to make missiles with Argentina and Egypt—against US norms on proliferation of such weapons. In the latter two cases, Fiat have stated categorically that the companies were not under their control at the time. But both the Gaddafi and Alfa affairs remain matters of murk and mystery.

The author's transparent love-hate relationship with his subject keeps the narrative bowling along and makes it a good read, despite its crassness on historical detail.

In one respect above others the book hits the mark: the lack of awareness of public accountability of its subject. Agnelli is portrayed by adoring Italians and Fiat employees as the *Avvocato* because he read law at university. Yet he is at times a poor advocate—rarely addressing press and public seriously and at length. Friends such as Henry Kissinger, we are told, find him witty, charming, glamorous and fun. Yet his public disquisition on world events can be vapid: could the playboy-thinker be a bit of a bore?

This makes the vehemence of Friedman's critique all the more surprising, and for Italians needlessly ungenerous; too many warts and too little of the glowing Mediterranean complexion. One is left wondering why he beats his subjects about the head so much—is it that he really wants to join them? ■ Robert Fox is Defence Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*.

PATRICK MORIN



Gianni Agnelli, Prince of Fiat

this month's best books

Non-Fiction

Live from Number 10

by Michael Cockerell

Faber & Faber, £14.95

How Prime Ministers have tried but (to judge from their complaints) largely failed to get to grips with television—"the most powerful form of communication known to man", in the words of Mrs Thatcher, whose hold seems stronger than most.

Munich: The Eleventh Hour

by Robert Kee

Hamish Hamilton, £14.95

A brilliant, detailed and lucid exposition of the European crisis of the 1930s, culminating in the grotesque event at Munich, when Britain and France acquiesced in the German invasion of Czechoslovakia and Chamberlain came away with an agreement which, within minutes of signing, Hitler declared invalid.

Inside the Think Tank

by Tessa Blackstone &

William Plowden

Heinemann, £14.95

Two of the liveliest former members of the Central Policy Review Staff, better known as the Cabinet's Think Tank, set out originally to describe its origins and the way it worked and ended up by adding its obituary when Mrs Thatcher summarily closed it down after her re-election in 1983.

Boom and Bust

by Christopher Wood

Sidgwick & Jackson, £15

Christopher Wood, the New York financial correspondent for *The Economist*, analyses the 1980s money boom and the 1987 collapse. He also provides some useful advice for individuals on how to survive the approaching depression.

Hong Kong

by Jan Morris

Viking, £14.95

The author combines her formidable descriptive powers with her knowledge of the Empire to provide an evocative portrait of the bustling British Crown Glory which, in less than a decade, is destined to become a jewel of China, henceforth to be identified as Zianggong.

The Letters of T. S. Eliot: Vol 1: 1898-1922

Edited by Valerie Eliot

Faber & Faber, £25

A fascinating but far from complete collection of letters covering the period from the poet's childhood in Missouri to the year of publication of *The Wasteland*, the product of his first unhappy marriage and his breakdown.

Fiction

The Captain and the Enemy

by Graham Greene

Reinhardt, £10.95

The master of English fiction is in fine form in this novella set in familiar Greene territories—seedy Camden Town and steamy Panama—with further variations on the well-worked themes of love, fear and betrayal, and the difficulty of separating the good from the bad.

Nice Work

by David Lodge

Secker & Warburg, £10.95

David Lodge is one of our funniest and most percipient writers. Here he brings together the academic and industrial worlds—as represented by a young female lecturer at a Midlands university and a hard-headed managing director of an ailing engineering firm—with great comic effect.

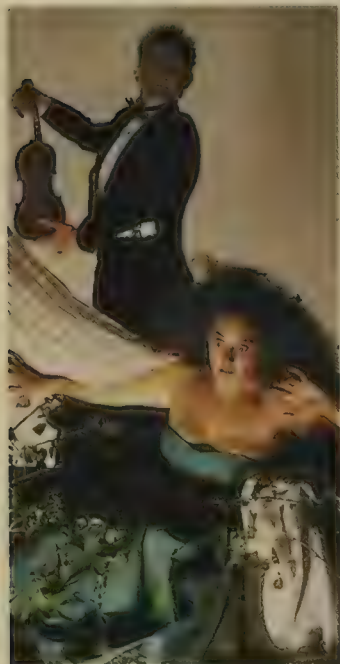
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Theatre

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The Admirable Crichton. Impeccable servant proves to be most resourceful when he & his aristocratic employers are shipwrecked on an island. Revival of the J.M. Barrie classic, starring Edward Fox & Rex Harrison. Until mid-Nov. Haymarket, SW1 (930 9832, CC).

Bartholomew Fair. Richard Eyre directs Jonson's tale. Olivier, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (928 2252, CC).



A discerning guide to entertainment in the city

Cymbeline & Harriet Walter as his daughter Imogen. *The Pit, Barbican.*

Divine Gossip. Stephen Lowe's musical comedy celebrates the highs of low-life in the Paris of 1929—"a town made for & by the imagination of expatriate artists". It looks at the experiences of various literary illuminati, among them Eric Blair (George Orwell). Barry Kyle directs. *The Pit, Barbican.*

Dry Rot. Ever-popular farce returns, with Brian Rix in the starring role. Directed by Christopher Renshaw.

psychoanalysis to childhood. Nicholas Wright's gripping play examines how her battle to increase the world's happiness nearly destroyed her own. Peter Gill directs; Gillian Barge plays Mrs Klein. *Cottesloe, National Theatre.*

The Secret of Sherlock Holmes. Spin-off from the highly-rated TV series, with Jeremy Brett donning the deerstalker to make elementary work of the most complex case he has ever faced. Edward Hardwicke co-stars. *Wyndham's, Charing Cross Rd, WC2 (867 1116, CC).*



directing Shakespeare's last play. Until Nov 26. *Old Vic, Waterloo Rd, SE1 (928 7616, CC 261 1821).*

Three Sisters. Major production of Chekhov's masterpiece, directed by John Barton. In a stifling provincial town, Irina (Stella Gonet), Olga (Deborah Findlay) & Masha (excellently played by Harriet Walter) yearn for the bright lights and excitement of Moscow. *Barbican.*

Uncle Vanya. Chekhov at its best: a distinguished cast, including Michael Gambon as Vanya, Imelda Staunton as Sonya & Greta Scacchi as Yelena. This



All the fun's on the fringe: Théâtre de Complicité perform a fast and furious repertoire at the Almeida, Islington. For other knit wits there's Fassett at the V & A

The Bite of the Night. Howard Barker's epic tale of how Dr Savage (Nigel Terry), last classics teacher at a defunct university, absconds with a student (David O'Hara) on a surreal journey to the eleven Troys of antiquity. Weird & only fitfully wonderful. Danny Boyle directs. *The Pit, Barbican, EC2 (638 8891, CC).*

Can-Can. Cole Porter's high-kicking musical, set among the Parisian *démimonde* of the 1890s, stars the "Queen of Broadway", Donna McKechie, with Milo O'Shea & Bernard Alane. *Strand, Aldwych, WC2 (836 2660, CC).*

The Changeling. A 17th-century tragedy dealing with sexual obsession. Richard Eyre directs Miranda Richardson & George Harris (who are both excellent). *Lyttelton, National Theatre. REVIEWED AUG, 1988.*

Cymbeline. Bill Alexander's powerful staging, with David Bradley as

Lyric, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (437 3686, CC).

The Father. First major London revival since 1964 of Strindberg's intense drama of conflict between the sexes. Directed by David Leveaux & starring Alun Armstrong. *Cottesloe, National Theatre.*

Julius Caesar. Terry Hands's production, with Sean Baker & Roger Allam among the cast, is lush, but handicapped by dull characterisations. *Barbican. REVIEWED AUG, 1988.*

Measure for Measure. High-octane performances from Roger Allam, Josette Simon & Sean Baker in Nicholas Hytner's production. *Barbican.*

Mountain Language. Harold Pinter directs his first play since 1984; a 25-minute piece, to be performed early evenings (6.15pm) & lunchtimes (1.15pm). *Lyttelton, National Theatre.*

Mrs Klein. Melanie Klein (1882-1960) had one abiding passion: to bring

The Secret Rapture. David Hare's fifth play for the National concentrates on the differing ways two sisters (Penelope Wilton & Jill Baker) choose to come to terms with the death of their father. Howard Davies directs. *Lyttelton, National Theatre.*

The Sneezes. A collection of humorous one-act plays & stories by Chekhov, newly translated & adapted by Michael Frayn. Ronald Eyre directs an impressive cast including Timothy West & Rowan Atkinson. *Aldwych, WC2 (836 6404, CC). REVIEW ON P77.*

Sugar Babies. Broadway musical smash starring Mickey Rooney & Ann Miller. A light-hearted but spectacular celebration of the great days of American burlesque, directed & choreographed by Ernest O'Flatt. *Savoy, Strand, WC2 (836 8888, CC).*

The Tempest. Jonathan Miller takes his turn after all the others this year

play, directed by Michael Blakemore is still one of the best shows in the West End and should not be missed. Until Nov 12. *Vaudeville, Strand, WC2 (836 9987, CC). REVIEWED JULY, 1988.*

First nights

Butterflies are Free. Lightweight comedy about a bachelor's friendship with an actress; both are trying to escape from over-protective families. Stars Peter O'Brien. Nov 7-12. *Ashcroft Theatre, Fairfield Halls, Croydon (688 9291, CC).*

The Churchill Play. Howard Brenton's passionate defence of democracy, written in 1974, gets a long-overdue revival. Barry Kyle directs. Opens Nov 30. *Barbican, EC2 (638 8891, CC).*

Henceforward. Alan Ayckbourn's latest play (number 34) asks the question: is life, let alone love, with a creative artist really worth the effort? Ian McKel-

Not to be missed

The film Veronico Cruz; Simon Callow in *Albie Sachs at the Young Vic*

Stay clear of

Les Paterson on film, failing to save the world: Steven Seagal in *Nico*

len plays Jerome, the most talented composer of the coming decade, & Jane Asher his wife. Opens Nov 16. *Vaudeville, Strand, WC2* (836 9987, CC).

The Magician's Nephew. Adapted by Glyn Robbins from the children's book by C.S. Lewis, this is the story of two young people who discover a secret, magic world in their uncle's attic. Opens Nov 29. *Westminster, Palace St, SW1* (834 0283, CC 379 4444).

A Question of Geography. Set in a Siberian gulag one month before Stalin's death, an exile (Harriet Walter) is reunited with her son (Linus Roache)

Fringe

The Beggar in the Palace. Performed in British sign language & English by differently abled & deaf actors. It is aimed at a deaf & hearing audience of 11-13 year olds. Nov 14-20. *Young Vic Studio, 66 The Cut, SE1* (928 6363).

A Christmas Carol. David Holman's adaptation is suitable for children. Opens Nov 24. *Young Vic.*

Complicité at the Almeida. Mixing styles & disciplines to produce unique theatre, Complicité offer a complete season at the invitation of Pierre Audi, the Almeida's artistic director. The rep-

Dreaming of Babylon. One-man adaptation by Kerry Shale, this time of Richard Brautigan's story about a private detective's adventures in San Francisco in 1948. Opens Nov 29. *Gate.*

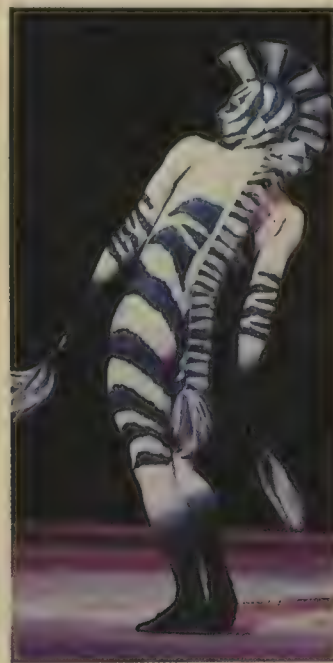
Hedda Gabler. Lindsay Duncan tackles the lead role in Trevor Nunn's version of the Ibsen classic. Until Nov 12. *Hampstead Theatre, Swiss Cottage Centre, NW3* (722 9224).

Inventing a New Colour. Paul Godfrey's new play is set in wartime Exeter, where two schoolboys (one an evacuee from London) attempt to piece together a bomb from the shrapnel they have

quhar's story of small-town life in 1706, as two determined women attempt to bring their lovers to heel during an army recruiting drive. Max Stafford-Clark's unadventurous direction fails to bring a sense of light & shade to the frantic text. Until Nov 12. *Royal Court.*

Success or Failure. Gloria Hamilton's musical, written in the Caribbean dialect, tells the story of how a spiv gives up the struggle and opts for a life on the streets. An Umoja Theatre Company production. Nov 22-27. *Croydon Warehouse, Croydon* (680 4060).

The Three Musketeers. A slapstick



Gerald Howland designs *The Gondollers*, New Sadler's Wells Opera, the Royal Ballet don Hayden Griffin's animals for *Penguin Café*; Phillip Broomhead plays a zebra

after a separation of 15 years. A British première co-written by John Berger & Nella Bielski: directed by John Caird. Opens Nov 23. *The Pit, Barbican.*

A Walk in the Woods. Russian & American statesmen find the best way to come to a compromise is through informality. Stars Alec Guinness & Edward Herrmann. Opens Nov 3. *Comedy, Panton St, SW1* (930 2578, CC 839 1438).

Stayers

Beyond Reasonable Doubt, *Queen's* (734 1166); **Cats,** *New London* (405 0072); **Chess,** *Prince Edward* (734 8951); **Follies,** *Shaftesbury* (379 5399); **42nd Street,** *Drury Lane* (836 8108); **Les Liaisons Dangereuses,** *Ambassador's* (836 6111); **Les Misérables,** *Palace* (434 0909); **The Mousetrap,** *St Martin's* (836 1443); **The Phantom of the Opera,** *Her Majesty's* (839 2244); **Starlight Express,** *Apollo* (828 8665).

ertoire includes their Perrier-award-winning *More Bigger Snacks Now*, & *Anything for a Quiet Life*—once described as “Kafka brought to hilarious & horrifying life”. Certainly not to be missed. Until Jan 21, 1989. *Almeida, Almeida St, N1* (359 4404, CC).

A Confederacy of Dunces. Kerry Shale plays 12 characters in an ambitious one-man adaptation of the cult novel by John Kennedy Toole about decadent New Orleans. Nov 8-26. *Gate Theatre, 11 Pembridge Rd, W11* (229 0706).

The Conquest of the South Pole. The Traverse Theatre Company's production of Manfred Karge's anarchic new drama. Four unemployed young men play a bizarre game in which they pretend they are part of Amundsen's expedition. Described as a “study of the conquest of hopelessness”. Opens Nov 17. *Royal Court, Sloane Sq, SW1* (730 1745, CC).

been collecting. Opens mid-Nov. *Royal Court Theatre Upstairs.*

The Jail Diary of Albie Sachs. On April 7 this year, Albie Sachs, the South African lawyer, writer & anti-apartheid activist was blown up by a car-bomb outside his home in Maputo. He survived, but not without serious injuries. This one-off benefit performance is the widely-acclaimed adaptation by David Edgar of the diary Sachs kept while in detention. An impressive cast includes Matthew Marsh as Sachs, Simon Callow & Edwin Richfield. Nov 6. *Young Vic.*

Our Country's Good. Timberlake Wertenbaker's adaptation of Thomas Keneally's novel. *The Playmaker* concerns a group of Australian convicts in 1789 preparing to stage a version of *The Recruiting Officer* (see below). In repertory with *The Recruiting Officer*. Until Nov 12. *Royal Court.*

The Recruiting Officer. George Far-

look at the Alexandre Dumas classic, presented by the New Vic Theatre Company in two halves. Part 1: Mon, Tues, Sat (mat). Part 2: Weds, Thurs, Fri, Sat. Oct 31-Nov 5. *Wimbledon Theatre, The Broadway, SW19* (540 0362).

Through a Glass Onion. Set in 1990, on the 10th anniversary of John Lennon's assassination, a fan weaned on the peace & love ethic is having to face the harsh realities of middle age. A touching anatomy of fan-worship, written & performed by David Fox. Nov 16-20. *Oval House Theatre, 52-54 Kennington Oval, SE11* (582 7680).

Walks on Water. Writer, director and performer Rose English pays homage to Vaudeville. With “flying” devices, large-scale scenery & a chorus of dancers, her intention is to rediscover the enchantment of the Hackney Empire. Nov 15-18. *Hackney Empire, 291 Mare St, E8* (985 2424).

the capital list

Cinema

The following films are expected to be showing in London or on general release at some time during the month. Programmes often change at short notice. Consult a local or daily newspaper for exact location & times.

Bagdad Café (PG). Two strong-willed women (Marianne Sägebrecht & C.C.H. Pounder) knock a dilapidated truckers' diner into shape. Offbeat & enchanting. REVIEWED OCT, 1988.

Big (PG). A 12-year-old boy becomes a 35-year-old man courtesy of a carnival wishing-machine, & ends up having the time of his life when he gets a job with a toy company. Penny Marshall's brisk direction & Tom Hanks's peerless

The Last Temptation of Christ (18). Now the row it provoked on release has subsided, it is clear that Martin Scorsese's devout adaptation of Nikos Kazantzakis's book is neither blasphemous nor particularly interesting as a movie. Willem Dafoe plays Christ & Barbara Hershey is a tattooed Mary Magdalene. Beyond redemption.

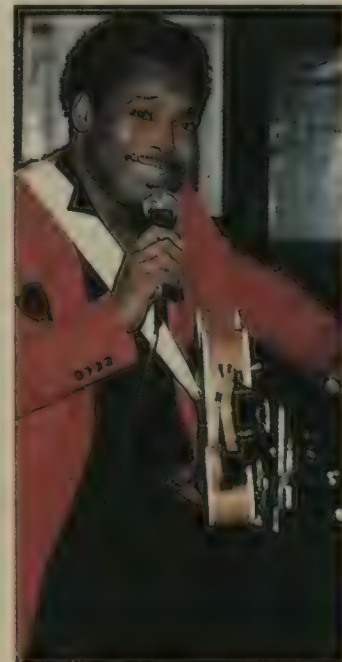
Law of Desire (18). Antonio will go to any lengths to attain Pablo's affections—even murder. Pedro Almodovar's gay love story is reminiscent of the early work of Fassbinder, only with added humour. The lack of AIDS-consciousness is arguably a serious error (is it a director's responsibility to make

The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne (15). Brian Moore's brooding novel gets the big-star treatment, with Maggie Smith as a lonely spinster who falls for conman Bob Hoskins. Veteran Jack Clayton (*Room at the Top*, *The Great Gatsby*), directs. Opens Nov 11. *Cannons Chelsea*, 279 King's Rd, SW3 (352 5096); *Shaftesbury Ave*, WC2 (836 8861).

Nico (18). Stars Steven Seagal, new pretender to the Schwarzenegger crown, as a Chicago cop out to expose CIA involvement in Central America. The vaguely left-of-centre plot, unusual for the genre, is let down by some appalling dialogue & unimaginative set-pieces. Seagal gets a chance to show off his mar-

Ashton (James Wilby—in grave danger of becoming typecast) falls for country wench Megan (Imogen Stubbs) with tragic consequences. Piers Haggard's adaptation of the John Galsworthy short story *The Apple Tree* is opulent in the grand tradition of English period-pieces, but never really ignites. Opens Oct 28. *Warner West End*.

Veronico Cruz (15). Brave but controversial Anglo-Argentinian co-production about a boy (Veronico Cruz) who grows up in a village in north-west Argentina, only to end his life in the sinking of the General Belgrano during the Falklands war. Directed by Miguel Pereira, it won the Silver Bear award in



Laid back: the cast of *Stand and Deliver*. Rampling by Helmut Newton at the National Portrait Gallery. And silky smooth: George Benson plays Wembley

comic skill in the lead role make this the surprise treat of the year.

Colors (18). Dennis Hopper directs Sean Penn & Robert Duvall in a tough tale of gang warfare in downtown Los Angeles. Some critics in the US slammed the film for glorifying violence. Opens Nov 11. *Odeon West End*, *Leicester Sq*, WC2 (930 5252)

Five Corners (15). New York thriller in the *Blue Velvet* mould, with Jodie Foster as a much-tormented kidnap victim. Gratuitously violent, the intended comic edge fails to materialise. Opens Oct 28. REVIEWED OCT, 1988.

Good Morning Vietnam (15). Madcap army-radio DJ Robin Williams uses unorthodox patter to cheer up the troops in Vietnam, much to the annoyance of his superiors. Starts as a good idea, but is ruined by the need to transform it into something universal & sentimental. REVIEWED OCT, 1988.

public information films?) but, that apart, this is the most innovative movie to have come out of Spain in the 80s. Opens Nov 4. *Metro*, *Rupert St*, W1 (437 0757); *Screen on the Hill*, 203 *Haverstock Hill*, NW3 (435 3366).

Les Patterson Saves the World (15). Crude, tired vehicle for the talents of Barry Humphries, who stars as both Sir Les & Dame Edna Everage. He also co-wrote the screenplay which does nothing to hide the fact that his characterisations do not have the range to sustain an entire movie.

London Film Festival. Over 140 films from 40 countries (many of them English premières) including Clint Eastwood's eagerly-awaited tribute to Charlie Parker, *Bird*; Greta Scacchi's latest, *Fear & Love*; & Best Direction winner at Cannes, *South*, by Fernando Solanas. Nov 10-27. *National Film Theatre*, *South Bank*, SE1 (928 3355).

tial arts skills but acts with the vivacity of a hologram. Opens Oct 28. *Cannons Fulham Rd*, SW10 (370 2636); *Oxford St*, W1 (636 0310); *Warner West End*, *Leicester Sq*, WC2 (439 0791).

Stand & Deliver (15). Top marks for this true story of one teacher's struggle to teach advanced calculus to a class of under-privileged kids in the Latin quarter of Los Angeles. Edward James Olmos stars as Jaime Escalante, with Lou Diamond Phillips & Rosana De Soto. Directed by Ramon Menendez. Opens Nov 18. *Cannons Chelsea*, *Tottenham Court Rd*, W1 (636 6148); *Screen on Baker St*, NW1 (935 2772); *Warner West End*. REVIEWED ON P74

Stars & Bars (15). Racy, sporadically hilarious comedy adapted by William Boyd from his own novel. Daniel Day Lewis is perfect as the ex-pat trying to make a new life for himself in America.

A Summer Story (15). Simpering toff

Berlin earlier this year. Opens Nov 25. *Camden Plaza*, 211 *Camden High St*, NW1 (485 2443). REVIEW ON P74.

Exhibitions

Opening
BARBICAN ART GALLERY
Barbican Centre, EC2 (638 4141).
Panoramania! Recalling the craze for paintings of the "all-embracing view" in the days before cinema, this major exhibition presents two specially-conserved examples: a 360° representation of the Battle of Trafalgar (shown in a tent) & a 120-foot-long depiction of a mid-19th-century journey from London to Hong Kong. Nov 3-Jan 15, 1989. Mon-Sat 10am-6.45pm, Sun noon-5.45pm. £3.50, concessions & all day Mon & after 5.30pm weekdays £1.75.
NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY
St Martin's Pl, WC2 (930 1552).
Helmut Newton: Portraits. German



**In 1986
these men
embarked upon
an adventure
that transformed
their lives.**

**They moved
into a bungalow.**

"I burnt the toast again this morning. I judged it right, but I just couldn't whip the grill pan out in time.

That's the trouble with cerebral palsy. It messes up your co-ordination. Your brain says 'Go!', but your hand is still by your side when the toast's gone black.

But it's just a disability. You don't have to let it get in the way of things. We wouldn't have missed our Spastics Society bungalow for anything.

We used to live in a Residential Centre. That's where we learnt to cook, clean and shop for ourselves.

Today we live in a home of our own.

It took us about a year to prepare for the move, and of course we needed a bit of help from our friends at The Spastics Society.

To be honest, we still do.

But now we can invite them round to our home instead.

In fact, I was thinking about calling them again this morning. Maybe they have some recipes for burnt toast."

FOR HELP, INFORMATION OR TO MAKE A DONATION WRITE TO THE SPASTICS SOCIETY AT 12 PARK CRESCENT, LONDON WIN 4EQ TEL: 01 636 5020.

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THE SPASTICS SOCIETY
FOR PEOPLE WITH CEREBRAL PALSY

Opening minds by opening doors.

the capital list

photographer whose reputation was built on fashion work in the 50s & 60s but whose style changed dramatically in 1971 after a serious heart attack. This retrospective has already shown successfully in Europe, & includes such famous faces as Elizabeth Taylor, Mick Jagger, Mickey Rourke & Charlotte Rampling. Nov 18-Feb 12, 1989.

Alice Springs Portrait Photographs. Alice Springs is the pseudonym of Mrs Helmut Newton who followed in her husband's footsteps when she fulfilled a commission that he, through illness, could not complete. A fascinating contrast. Nov 18-Feb 12, 1989.

Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 2-6pm. £1, concessions 50p.

NICK WHITE



Sarah Leonard sings work from Gavin Bryars's new opera on the South Bank. Eisenstein's *Macbeth*, 1921, at the Hayward. Huey Lewis has news for Wembley

SLADMORE GALLERY

32 Bruton Pl, W1 (499 0365).

Rembrandt Bugatti—An Exhibition of Sculpture. A series of stunning bronzes of jungle animals is the focus of this first one-man show since 1979. Bugatti (1885-1916) is recognised as one of the most influential figurative sculptors of the 20th century. Nov 1-30. Mon-Fri 10am-6pm, Sat 10am-1pm.

SMITHS GALLERIES

33 Shelton St, WC2 (836 6252).

Contemporary Art Society Market Nicknamed the "art supermarket", thanks in part to Sainsbury's sponsorship, this year's event has over 700 original works (£70 to £700). Nov 9-12. Wed-Sat 11am-8pm.

VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM

Cromwell Rd, SW7 (938 8500).

Kaffe Fassett. Perhaps the best-known designer in knitting today exhibits works inspired by objects in the V&A's

collections the intricate patterns of Japanese art & swirling colours of Islamic pottery are major influences. Nov 16-Jan 8, 1989. Mon-Sat 10am-5.50pm, Sun 2.30-5.50pm. Voluntary donation, suggested £2, concessions 50p.

Still showing

CRAFTS COUNCIL

12 Waterloo Pl, SW1 (930 4811).

Craft Classics since the 1940s. 200 pieces by 33 craftsmen including Bernard Leach, Lucie Rie & John Makepeace. Until Jan 8. Tues-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 2-5 pm. £1, concessions 60p.

HAYWARD GALLERY

South Bank, SE1 (928 3144).

Eisenstein 1898-1948: His Life &

ОЙ ЗВУКОВОЙ ИСТОРИЧЕСКИЙ ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННЫЙ ФИЛЬМ



Work. Coinciding with a season of his films at the National Film Theatre, this is the first major retrospective of the great Russian director's career. Seven displays include film stills, costumes & memorabilia. Until Dec 11. Mon-Wed 10am-8pm, Thurs-Sat until 6pm, Sun noon-6pm. £3, concessions & everybody all day Mon & after 6pm Tues & Wed £1.50.

ROYAL ACADEMY

Piccadilly, W1 (439 7438).

Toulouse-Lautrec: The Complete Graphic Works. Between 1891 & 1901 Toulouse-Lautrec produced 30 posters & approximately 330 prints of life in Parisian café society. Until Jan 4. Daily 10am-6pm. £3, concessions & everybody Sun until 1.45pm £2.

TATE GALLERY

Millbank, SW1 (821 1313).

David Hockney: A Retrospective. Colourful & still provocative collection

of work, organised by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Until Jan 8. Mon-Sat 10am-5.50pm, Sun 2-5.50pm. £3, concessions £1.50.

After dark

Please phone to confirm details.

Club Kilimanjaro. One of the high peaks of clubland, DJ Rene Williams can be relied on to spin the best in African music. Sundays. 78 Wells St, W1 (580 2881).

The Guilty Pea. Alternative comedy with a dash of new variety thrown in. Big names usually mean big laughs. Saturdays. The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Pl, W1 (986 6861).

Mud Club. Five years old & still going

the year. Chucho Valdes leads the band from the piano stool. Nov 7-13. Ronnie Scott's, 47 Friar St, W1 (439 0747).

Joe Pass. Lyrical, sonorous solos from one of the masters of jazz guitar. An erstwhile session-man for the greats (Duke Ellington, Oscar Peterson & Chet Baker among them) he now prefers to play solo. Not to be missed. Oct 31-Nov 6. Ronnie Scott's.

Rock

George Benson Silky-smooth soul from the American singer/guitarist. Nov 1-4. Wembley Arena, Middx (902 1234, CC 741 8989).

Billy Bragg Gritty, polemical songs belted out by the Romford bard. Nov



strong, the Mud has recently got heavily into Acid House. Always a full dance-floor. Fridays. Busby's, 157 Charing Cross Rd, WC2 (734 6963).

Storm Club. Smoky, intimate jazz club that doesn't cost an arm & a leg (at £4 it's the cheapest in London). Rated live bands every week. Thursdays. Upstairs at Drummonds, 73-77 Euston Rd, NW1 (387 4566).

Town & Country Comedy Club. New chuckle-club situated in the upstairs bar of the T&C. Price of admission includes entry to the disco downstairs. Fridays. 9-17 Highgate Rd, NW5 (267 3334).

Jazz

In Cahoots. Phil Miller's hardworking contemporary jazz outfit. Nov 6. Bass Clef, 85 Coronet St, N1 (729 2440).

Irakere. Cuban rhythm aces, back after making a big hit at this venue earlier in

29. Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Court Rd, W1 (580 9562, CC).

Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds. Sleazy, atmospheric rock from the ex-Birthday Party frontman. The thinking man's indie artist. Nov 27, 28. Town & Country Club, 9-17 Highgate Rd, NW5 (267 3334).

Chris De Burgh. Soulless soul from the man who brought you "Lady in Red". Nov 17-19. Wembley Arena.

The Hollies It's often forgotten that, in the 60s, this was Britain's most successful chart act bar the Beatles (with 21 Top 20 hits). Could a revival be in the offing? Nov 6. Fairfield Halls, Croydon (688 9291).

Huey Lewis & The News. "Bad-ass rawk & roll", as they say in America. Like a rough Springsteen. Nov 27-29. Wembley Arena.

Sade. The Queen of cool returns. Her unspectacular voice made up for by the quality of the band's musicianship. Wembley Arena.

SOMETHING SPECIAL

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Classics

BARBICAN HALL

EC2 (638 8891, CC).

Schubert-Mendelssohn: the classical romantics. A series of 30 concerts, presented in collaboration with the Wigmore Hall. Nov 5-Dec 9.

Viktoria Postrikova, piano, plays Chopin and Rachmaninov. Nov 20, 3pm.

The Royal Concert, in the presence of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, given by the Scottish National Orchestra under Bryden Thomson, in aid of the Musicians Benevolent Fund & other charities. Nov 23, 7.45pm.

Shostakovich: music from the flames. Rostropovich conducts the London Symphony Orchestra in two Shostakovich programmes. Nov 15, 24, 7.45pm.

QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL

South Bank Centre.

Gavin Bryars Ensemble perform works by Bryars, with Sarah Leonard, soprano. Nov 18, 7.45pm.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

SW1. Abbey box office: 27 Victoria St, SW1 (222 2061, CC).

Choir of Westminster Abbey & English Chamber Orchestra give the first performance of John Tavener's *Akathist of Thanksgiving*. Nov 21, 7pm.

Opera

ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA

London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (836 3161, CC 240 5258).

Simon Boccanegra. David Alden's controversial production, with the title

Manon. Rumanian soprano Leontina Vaduva makes her company debut in the title role. Nov 14, 19, 23, 26, 29.

Dance

Royal Ballet. Hamlyn Westminster Week.

Performances at reduced prices for people who haven't attended the ballet before. In repertoire: *Ondine*—the late Frederick Ashton's masterpiece. Triple bill: *Rhapsody*, Ashton's one-act ballet to Rachmaninov; *The Trial of Prometheus*, David Bintley's interpretation of the Greek myth; *'Still Life' at the Penguin Café*, Bintley's up-beat piece set to music from Simon Jeffes's Penguin Café Orchestra recordings. *The Sleeping Beauty*, the centenary season of Petipa's classic version. Tickets for the Hamlyn

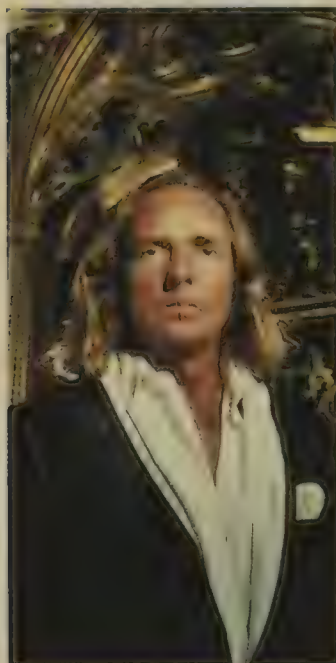
series of cellars which are hired out for parties.

4 Gossips Nightclub, 69 Dean St, W1. One of London's many, subterranean dancing haunts. Another is **The Crypt**, under St Paul's Church, Deptford High St, SE8.

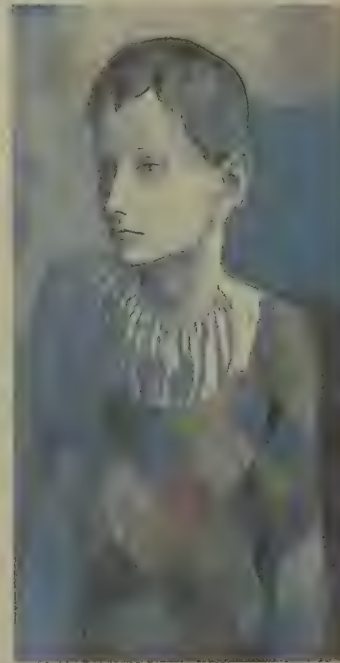
5 The Other St Pancras, Euston Rd, NW1. A complete station beneath St Pancras, including a platform, buffet & waiting-rooms, was bricked up at the end of the last century.

6 Cabinet War Rooms, King Charles St, SW1. Emergency HQ used by Churchill's government during the war. Six acres of blast-proof rooms, 40 feet underground, now open to the public.

7 Brompton Cemetery Catacombs, Old Brompton Rd, SW10. Built in the



John Tavener: new work in Westminster Abbey. London underground: the Cabinet War Rooms. At Christie's: Picasso's *Acrobate et Jeune Arlequin* (detail)



FESTIVAL HALL

South Bank Centre, SE1 (928 3191, CC 928 8800).

Bartók-Solti Series: Georg Solti conducts the London Philharmonic in four Bartók concerts, including *Duke Bluebeards Castle*, Piano Concertos Nos 1-3, Violin Concerto No 2. Nov 16, 11, 17, 7.30pm.

Armistice Festival to mark the 70th anniversary of the 1918 armistice & pay tribute to the artistic achievements of some of those who died. At the opening concert the Philharmonia Orchestra, under Yehudi Menuhin & Gennadi Rozhdestvensky, play Butterworth, Magnard, Granados. Nov 5, 7.30pm.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Yuri Temirkanov, to mark his 10 years as principal guest conductor, gives three Tchaikovsky concerts, with Natalia Gutman, cello, Oleg Kagan, violin, Evgeny Kissin, piano. Nov 20, 22, 24, 7.30pm.

role sung by Malcolm Donnelly. Oct 25, 28, Nov 2, 4, 10, 15, 18, 24, 26.

La traviata. Helen Field sings Violetta. Oct 26, 29, Nov 3.

The Barber of Seville. Jonathan Miller's *commedia dell'arte* production. Oct 27, Nov 5, 8, 11, 16, 19.

The Making of the Representative for Planet 8. European première of Philip Glass's latest opera, produced by the Japanese director Minoru Terada Domberger. Nov 9, 12, 17, 22, 30.

NEW SADLER'S WELLS OPERA Sadler's Wells Theatre, Rosebery Ave, EC1 (278 8916, CC).

La Belle Hélène & The Gondoliers. In repertory until Nov 5.

ROYAL OPERA

Covent Garden, WC2 (240 1066/1911, CC).

Madama Butterfly. Produced by the eminent Spanish director Nuria Espert. Oct 31, Nov 3, 5, 15, 18, 21.

week (Nov 7-12) are distributed through a wide range of organisations. Details from Camilla Whitworth-Jones, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (240 1066/1911, CC).

List of the month

London under London

Most of us are unaware that beneath the concrete & clay upon which we walk there is a hidden, subterranean world:

1 Post Office Mini-Railway. 6½ miles of track from Paddington to Whitechapel: 34 electric trains ferry post between sorting offices. The tunnels were used during the Blitz to store art treasures.

2 Freemasons' Temple, Piccadilly. Directly underneath Regent Street, a small hall, the entrance to which is in the sub-basement of the Café Royal.

3 Old Wine Cellars. Even deeper beneath the Freemasons' Hall are a

1840s & full for more than 50 years.

8 Tram Tunnels at Kingsway, Holborn, WC2. In the 50s these were converted into offices for running the city in the event of the Thames flooding & more recently into a secret nerve centre in case of nuclear war.

9 Fleet River. Runs from Hampstead & joins the Thames at Blackfriars. Legend has it that a herd of wild pigs used to feed along the river & that when it was bridged over to form Fleet Street, they went underground—where they remain to this day.

10 Tunnels under the Tube. Built in the 20s & 30s, they are said to be used as storerooms for official secrets.

Other Events

Picasso Masterpiece. £10 million is expected for Picasso's *Acrobate et Jeune Arlequin*, painted in 1905. Nov 28. Christie's, 8 King St, SW1 (839 9060).

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Graydon Carter

Three diverting tales of greed from New York this fall. The protagonists include Mike Milken, the secretive, rug-wearing 42-year-old head of Drexel Burnham Lambert's infamous high-yield-and-convertible-bond department; Bess Myerson, 63, a dotty one-time Miss America and the former escort of New York Mayor Ed Koch; and Leona Helmsley, 67, a tax-evading harriidan, queen of her own hotel empire. All three had money sufficient to last them the rest of their lifetimes, and yet all three allegedly broke the law to get a little bit more.

Milken first. As a sort of post-Labour Day present for Milken buffs, the Securities and Exchange Commission—after a two-year investigation that began when Ivan Boesky, the convicted stock manipulator and former arbitrageur, began to talk to the authorities in order to shorten his jail sentence—delivered to Milken and Drexel Burnham a 184-page indictment that comprises the largest securities-fraud case in US history, and certainly the most aggressive charges ever brought against a Wall Street investment banking firm. (Criminal charges from the US Attorney's office were to follow within a few months.) The accusations against Milken and Drexel range from insider trading to overcharging the firm's own clients.

When you are as rich as Drexel (the company has assets of \$30 billion) and Milken (probably the highest-paid company employee in the world: he makes \$200 million a year and is said to be worth \$1 billion), you do not take this kind of name-calling, however accurate, lying down. And they are not. The most expensive law firms, pollsters and public relations experts that money can buy have been employed keeping Milken and his henchmen out of jail and helping invent an unsullied reputation for Drexel. The company has invested \$146 million—\$146 million, mind you—in public relations sleight-of-

hand and document copying before the trial has even started. More than \$45 million alone went to Arthur Anderson, Drexel's accounting firm, for collating and copying the documents that the government investigators had requested. Milken himself has retained President Reagan's former image-consultant, Linda Gosden Robinson, and Arthur Liman, chief counsel to the Senate Iran-Contra Committee and the lawyer who successfully represented Penzoil in its lawsuit to win \$10 billion in damages from Texaco.

Milken now cloaks himself in the trappings of the selfless do-gooder—taking 1,700 underprivileged kids (all wearing Drexel T-shirts and hats) to a baseball game in New York; shuttling other youngsters to Sea World or the circus; and even going so far as to ask 100 children from Queens to visit the company's Wall Street trading floor.

Where Milken's shenanigans have proved infuriating—and costly to future litigants—Bess Myerson's are just plain pathetic. Named Miss America in 1945, she became a TV fixture in the early days of television on the popular panel show, *I've Got a Secret*. Myerson served effectively as New York's Commissioner of Consumer Affairs under Mayor John Lindsay, and ineffectively as the city's Commissioner of Cultural Affairs under Ed Koch—a post from which she was forced to resign earlier this year.

She is currently in trouble because of her long-standing affair with Andy Capasso, a man born the year she was crowned Miss America, who made millions as a sewer contractor, was a close friend of Mafia *capo* Matty "The Horse" Ianiello, and is now in prison for tax evasion. Two weeks before Capasso's attempt to reduce the amount of his divorce settlement, Myerson coincidentally offered the daughter of the judge hearing the case a highly-paid job in her office. The daughter, who had a history of mental

instability and was unemployed, despite making contact with more than 100 companies, later developed a crush on Myerson. The judge subsequently reduced Capasso's wife's \$1,500-a-week maintenance by two-thirds, and her weekly child support of \$350 by almost half.

While waiting for her autumn trial, Myerson went to see Capasso, imprisoned in Pennsylvania. She parked her Lincoln Continental outside a discount department store and went inside. Although worth \$16 million and carrying \$160 in cash at the time, she stuffed \$44.07 worth of goods into her purse. The store guard caught her shoplifting. She pleaded guilty.

Like Myerson, Leona Helmsley, an oft-married and much-despised New York figure, also has a history of shopping misadventures. A few years ago, she was discovered to have participated in a fraud with Van Kleef & Arpels, the Fifth Avenue jewellery house, in order to save herself \$40,000 taxes on the purchase of \$485,000 in baubles. She received immunity from prosecution in exchange for testifying against the store. The daughter of a Brooklyn hatter, Helmsley first

thrust her much-travelled body into the public light when she convinced Harry Helmsley, then one of the largest landowners in New York (more than \$250 million a year in city real estate taxes alone), to divorce the woman he had been married to for a third of a century and marry her if she could shed 20 unsightly pounds. Until recently, Leona was the self-crowned Queen of the Helmsley hotel empire whose ubiquitous ads bore a heavily-airbrushed likeness of herself and the tag line, "The Only Palace Where the Queen Stands Guard".

Nobody liked the Helmsleys very much, but their money opened doors and, perhaps with visions of recasting themselves as latter-day Gatsbys, they set to work rehabilitating Dunnellen Hall, their \$11 million, 28-room, mock-Jacobean estate in Greenwich, Connecticut. Unfortunately, they were allegedly spending company funds. The Helmsleys' empire is worth an estimated \$5 billion, but they own only a fifth of the actual shares. Among the so-called business expenses they paid through their company were a \$130,000 stereo system, a \$45,000 silver clock, and more than \$500,000 in jade objects. Their book-keeping mistakes have produced 235 counts of tax evasion, conspiracy, kickbacks and extortion.

The fate of Myerson and the Helmsleys will be known this year. The government's cases against Milken and Drexel will likely stretch on into the 1990s. All parties wilfully broke the law, it is alleged, and, if convicted, all should be punished. Of course, none of them will serve the terms of imprisonment befitting their alleged crimes. If one were making predictions, the sentences might go like this: Milken—three years in a semi-luxury, minimum-security federal prison; Myerson—one year in a semi-luxury, minimum-security federal prison; Leona—three years in a semi-luxury, minimum-security federal prison. Harry, aged and ill, will get no jail, but spend his declining years in semi-luxury in the minimum-security prison that he and his wife built for themselves, the 28-room Dunnellen Hall ■



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